

BoXer and phase 5 cooperate to provide new Amiga possibilities.

# Amazing / AMIGA

COMPUTING™  
Your Original AMIGA® Monthly Resource

Volume 13 No. 4 April 1998  
US \$3.95 Canada \$5.95

## QuikPak Announcements!

A New Amiga Tower,  
AmigaOnLine,  
and a new Amiga upgrade

### Aladdin 4D:

Blending Bitmap/  
Procedural Variations

### MindEYE

Create a Light & Sound Show!

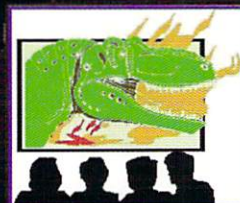
### Cinemorph Glows

### PLUS!

JavaScript on the Amiga  
Light-ROM GOLD  
Vulcan News  
Special Workbench FX  
Adobe Image Library  
and more!



DTP Tutorial:  
3D Clip Art  
Add depth to stand out!





# INTRODUCING THE NEW 1998 QUIKPAK A4060T POWERTOWER

At first glance, just a new, larger, more stylish case.

But ...

when you release the patented hydraulic door, the PowerTower begins to whet the appetite of Amiga Power Users with a host of standard features and available factory installed options.

**Standard:**

MKE LS120 SuperFloppy  
Accepts PC formats down  
to 720KB and up to 100MB  
of storage using available  
SuperDisk media.

**Standard:**

24X CDROM with factory  
installed software

**Standard:**

880K AMIGA Floppy Drive

**Optional: (shown)**

Syquest 1.5Gb  
SCSI removable media  
HDD makes transporting  
Data and applications easier  
than ever.



**And... when you "pop the hood"**

You find more drive bays and more room  
for peripherals. The removable side  
panels make it easier than ever to add  
drives, and boards to your system.

**And a few other surprises that make  
this the most powerful, versatile and  
expandible Amiga™ yet.**



**And, just when you thought we forget our A4000T customers...**

**A4000T owners can upgrade to the A4060T PowerTower.**

By upgrading, all the new features and options are available and the warranties  
on the A4000T mother board, A/V board, Disk board, and Ports board are  
renewed for 1 more year!



**Contact your local dealer for more information - or visit our Web site at [www.QuikPak.com](http://www.QuikPak.com)**

# An Open Letter to the Amiga Community

To: The Amiga Community

From: David A. Ziembicki  
CEO, QuikPak Corporation

Welcome to 1998. This should prove to be the year for new Amiga products from around the world. QuikPak is releasing several new versions of the Amiga as well. On the opposite page is just a taste of what we will be shipping this month. As shown in the picture, we have added a version of the A4060T that is equipped with the fastest Motorola 68060 yet - the 66 MHz. The CPU card in the A4060T is also new and provides outstanding performance as well as enhanced SCSI capabilities.

The new A4060T PowerTower is aimed directly at Videographers and other Power Users who need a higher end computer with more expandability and room for multiple processors. We have looked at the majority of A4000T profiles and listened to the feedback from our customer base, and, based on your needs, we have created (in record time) the fast and dependable Amiga system you need today with the expansion capability you want for tomorrow.

Also, we have not forgotten the thousands of A4000T owners who have already made their investment. Our upgrade program will allow these loyal customers to get all of the enhancements and features by utilizing their current A4000T. We are also renewing the warranty on systems that are upgraded. Look for more details, specifications, and benchmarks for the new A4060T PowerTower on our Web site at [www.QuikPak.com](http://www.QuikPak.com).

As always, thank you for your continued interest and support for our line of computers "Powered by Amiga".

## NOW THINGS ARE HAPPENING WITH THE AMIGA



TEL: 610-287-8866, FAX: 610-287-0746  
or by email: [quikpak@aol.com](mailto:quikpak@aol.com)  
[www.quikpak.com](http://www.quikpak.com)



### Distributors - North America

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109 S. Duncan  
Champaign, IL 61821  
Phone: (217) 356-1884  
FAX: (217) 356-1881

#### Software Hut

313 Henderson Drive  
Sharon Hill, PA 19079  
Phone: (610) 586-5701  
FAX: (610) 586-5707  
WWW: [www.softhut.com](http://www.softhut.com)  
EMAIL: [softhut@erols.com](mailto:softhut@erols.com)

### Dealers - North America

#### --CANADA--

#### Arch Computer Technology

London, Ontario  
Voice: 519-858-8760  
Fax: 519-858-8762

#### CineReal Pro-Video

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Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 7G8  
Voice/FAX: 613-798-8150 (Call first to fax)

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3515 - 18th Street S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta T2T 4T9  
Voice: 403-243-4356  
Fax: 403-243-2684  
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[austin@canuck.com](mailto:austin@canuck.com)

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[saurus@xcelco.on.ca](mailto:saurus@xcelco.on.ca)

#### GfxBase Electronique, Inc

1727 Shevchenko  
Montreal, Quebec  
Voice: 514-367-2575  
Fax: 514-367-5265  
BBS: 514-769-0565

#### Oshawa Amiga

Oshawa, ON L1J 5J8  
Phone: 905-728-7048  
WWW: [web.idirect.com/~oshamiga](http://web.idirect.com/~oshamiga)  
[mjacula@idirect.com](mailto:mjacula@idirect.com)

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vox: 905-939-8371  
fax: 905-939-8745  
WWW: [www.randomize.com](http://www.randomize.com)  
[randomize@interlog.com](mailto:randomize@interlog.com)



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P.O. Box 864  
Pembroke, Ontario K8A 7M5  
Voice: 613-732-7700  
Fax: 613-732-8477  
WWW: www.renc.igs.net/~valsoft

## Video Link

53 Lucy Avenue  
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Voice: 800-567-8481  
WWW: www.videolink.ca

## Wonder Computers

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1315 Richmond Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K2B 8J7  
Voice: 613-721-1800  
Fax: 613-721-6992  
WWW: www.wonder.ca

## Wonder Computers

**Vancouver Sales Office**  
2229 Edinburgh St.  
New Westminster, BC W3M 2Y2  
Voice: 604-524-2151

==UNITED STATES==

## Alex Electronics

597 Circlewood Dr.  
Paradise, CA 95969  
Voice/Fax: 916-872-3722  
BBS: 915-872-3711  
WWW: www.wordbench.com/  
alex@wordbench.com

## Amiga-Crossing

PO Box 12A  
Cumberland Center, ME 04021  
Voice: 800-498-3959 (Maine only)  
Voice: 207-829-3959  
Fax: 207-829-3522  
amiga-x@tka.com

## Amiga Exchange

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Voice/Fax: 310-534-3817  
BBS: 310-325-1796  
robertwt@ix.netcom.com

## Amiga Video Solutions

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St. Paul, MN 55105  
Voice: 612-698-1175  
Fax: 612-224-3823  
BBS: 612-698-1918  
wohno001@maroon.tc.umn.edu

## AntiGravity

1649 16th Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90404  
Voice: 310-399-8785

## Applied Multimedia Inc.

89 Northhill St.  
Stamford, CT 06907  
Voice: (203) 348-0108

## Apogee Technologies

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Sarasota, FL 34243  
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brent@armos.com

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Fax: 313-522-3119  
clink@m-net.arbornet.org

## The Computer Room

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WWW: www.computerroom.com  
Email: sales@computerroom.com

## The Computer Source

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Voice: 203-336-3100  
Fax: 203-336-3259

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Logan, UT 84322

## Concord Computer Solutions

2745 Concord Blvd. Suite 5  
Concord, CA 94519  
Orders: 1-888-80-AMIGA  
Info/Tech: 510-680-0143  
BBS/Fax: 510-680-4987  
WWW: www.ccompsol.com/  
moxley@value.net

## CPU Inc.

5168 East 65th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46220  
Voice: 317-577-3677  
Fax: 317-577-1500  
cpuken@indy.net

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P.O. Box 56941  
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BBS2 & Fax: 907-488-2647

## DC Productions

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dcprolchetw@heifetz.msen.com

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Fax: (812)330-0126  
BIX: msears

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Fax: 610-378-0996

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FAX: 509-928-4244

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Hawkcom@inav.net

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ko4ox@erols.com

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BIX: msears

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BBS: 509-522-8485  
jolson@wwics.com

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Fax: 619-589-5230  
tlively@connectnet.com

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Contact: Patrick Smith  
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Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
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tracerb@sprintmail.com

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Fax: 713-995-4994

## MicroTech Solutions, Inc.

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info@mt-inc.com

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WWW: www.li.net/~hardware  
hardware@li.net

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St. Paul, MN 55114-1521  
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## System Eyes Computer Store

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Fax: (603) 424-3939  
j\_sauter@systemeye.ultranet.com

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FAX: 818-505-1811

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Danbury, CT 06811-5114  
Voice: 203-744-0100  
Voice: 800-411-3332  
videology@snet.net

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TEL: 610-287-8866, FAX: 610-  
287-0746 or by email:  
quikpak@aol.com

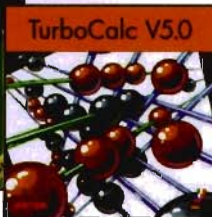
BoXer, Blittersoft and phase 5 unite, p.10

# Amazing / AMIGA

COMPUTING



TurboCalc V5.0



New Products, P.9



Aladdin 4D, P.14

Pixelz  
Pixelz

Pixelz

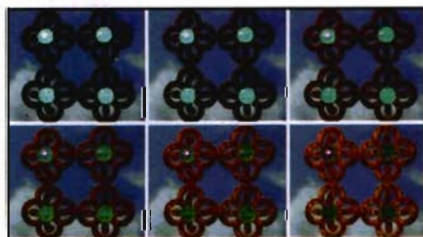
Pixelz

Pixelz

PixPro Pos & Neg, P.18



On Line, P.30



Cinemorph Glows, P.34

## 9 New Products

& other neat stuff

"Oxypatcher," Air Mail Pro 2.0, TurboCalc V5.0, Vote in AAA Awards, phase 5 and BoXer unite, and much more!

## 14 Aladdin 4D Tutorial #17:

Blended Bitmap/

Procedural Variations:

by R. Shamms Mortier

It is time to enumerate the ways that texture sandwiches, built of any number or combination of procedurals and/or bitmaps, can be constructed.



## 17 Byte Sized Reviews

by Nick Cook

Adobe Image Library and OUIJA.

## 18 PixPro Pos & Neg

by R. Shamms Mortier

Is there life in this old Amiga program? You betcha!

## 22 MindEYE

by Nick Cook

Create a light & sound show - without magic mushrooms or funny cigarettes.

## 26 This Old Workbench: Episode 16 Special Workbench FX

by Dave Matthews

A "Behind the Scenes" look at some of the special effects from This Old Workbench.

## 28 3D DTP Adding Depth to Your Favorite Clip Art

by Nick Cook

Don't let your clip art just lie there. Give it that extra dimension to make it stand out.

## 30 On Line

by Rob Hays

JavaScript is now part of the Amiga.

## 34 Cinemorph Glows

by R. Shamms Mortier

When morphing think "keyframes" and the "in-betweens" to produce your result.

## 48 QuikPak's

David Ziembecki

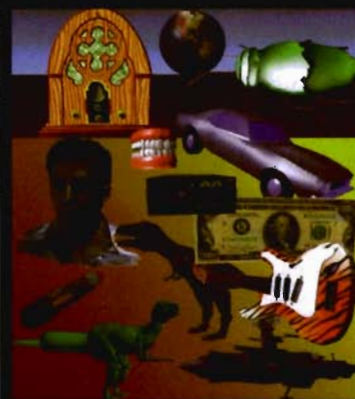
A New Amiga Tower, A New Amiga OS, and AmigaOnLine highlight QuikPak's plans for the Amiga line.



## 36 Games on the AMIGA

by Peter Olafson

Vulcan redefines their Amiga game strategy.



## 42 Light-ROM Gold

by R. Shamms Mortier

The Light-ROM Gold CD-ROM is more than meets the eye.

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# Editorial Content

## A New GUIDE, A New Mission.

### Being There

Since the first issue of *Amazing Computing*, we have followed the development of Amiga products. Our premiere issue carried a product list of both available (very few) products and promised (larger, but less convincing) products for the Amiga. At the close of our first year, we included a separate book listing available products. Then came *AC's GUIDE*.

*AC's GUIDE* became the one resource for everyone in the Amiga marketplace. Under one cover, we were able to place all commercial and non-commercial software, hardware, user groups, vendors, and more. Many people used the Guide as their white pages for the Amiga community.

*AC's GUIDE* was no small task. Each issue required an extreme amount of energy and resources. From the collection of data to the final layout, we kept a team of twenty people busy producing the *GUIDE* as well as the regular issues of *Amazing Computing*.

Our last *GUIDE* was the Summer of '94. We were producing that issue as Commodore was announcing bankruptcy. When we began producing the next issue in the fall of 1994, we ran into a major problem that has plagued us ever since—vendor apathy.

### Just Do It!

Nike has a saying that, while not overly flamboyant, at least it gets people moving. "Just Do It!" I don't think they care what you do, just do something.

In the Amiga market, we need to take the same stand. So many companies are waiting to see what everyone else will do. They continue to wait and, by waiting, continue to draw down the rest of the market.

There are exceptions. This issue is full of them. Nova Design, QuikPak, Index, phase 5, and others have promoted their products and continued to move slowly forward. Their speed is only restrained by the rest of the market they must carry on their backs. Now is the time for all that to stop!

### A New GUIDE

With this issue, we have drawn a line in the sand. Come June, there will be a new *GUIDE*. Every Amiga vendor will be contacted and everyone will have an

opportunity to be included. If you have a product for the Amiga market, this is your chance to reach your market.

While we do accept advertising in the *GUIDE* (let's be real—it's needed), we do not charge for single listings. This means that, large or small, every Amiga vendor can be included. However, they will need to complete the form (the form that has been on page 39 of each issue of *Amazing Computing/Amiga* for these past many months).

If you are a User Group, please be sure to complete a form also. If you are a shareware author, please complete the form. If you provide any service to the Amiga community, this is your opportunity—don't miss it!

ANYONE who does not complete the form, will not be included. The forms are our only means of verifying a company's or individual's participation. We will accept faxes and even email submissions (see the email form on our website at [www.pimpub.com](http://www.pimpub.com)), but we cannot accept non-participation.

### More Than Ever

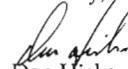
To some, the Amiga market may be smaller. However, this guide will extend its coverage from before. Instead of a Fred Fish listing, we will examine the best of the shareware and public domain from Aminet and on. The issue will also include a CD-ROM with listings, vendor information, websites, and more.

Current *AC* subscribers will receive the SuperGUIDE (an *AC's GUIDE* and a CD-ROM) if they have two or more GUIDES due to them (each SuperGUIDE counts for two GUIDES) or a regular *AC's GUIDE* if they only have one *GUIDE* currently on their subscription. For more information, please see the explanation at the bottom of the ad on page 8.

### Where We Are Going?

Our hope is to get everyone to participate and to provide a much needed jump start for the next level of Amiga development. With the activities of phase 5, QuikPak, and more trying hard to improve the Amiga, it is our obligation to let everyone know who is in that market.

Sincerely,



Don Hicks  
Managing Editor

# Amazing COMPUTING / AMIGA

Amazing Computing/AMIGA™

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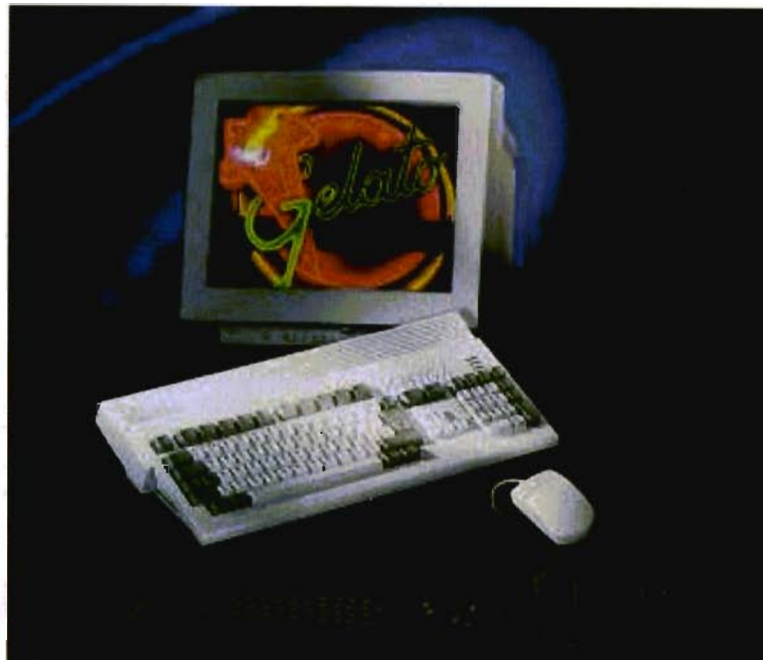
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International, Inc.

## They're Back... AMIGA 1200s for North America



One of the Amiga's most popular editions is returning to North America. Amiga International is re-releasing the AMIGA 1200 in NTSC beginning December 1, 1997. Don't miss this opportunity to purchase one of the most popular Amiga systems of all time.

The AMIGA 1200 includes:

- Motorola 68EC020 / 14 MHz, 2 MB RAM onboard
- 32-bit RAM expansion up to an additional 8 MB, significantly more 32-bit RAM may be added with an accelerator board installed
- AA Graphics System, colour palette: up to 16.8 million colours (24 Bit), 256 of them displayable simultaneously or more than 640,000 in HAM8
- Graphics resolutions: from 320 x 200 pixels noninterlaced 50 Hz up to 1280 x 512 pixels interlaced 50 Hz or 640 x 480 pixels noninterlaced 60 Hz or 640 x 400 pixels noninterlaced 70 Hz and many more freely programmable modes
- Video and Genlock capable
- 4-Channel Stereo Sound standard, each 8 Bit DMA
- Keyboard: 96 keys
- Mouse: high resolution 400 dpi, 2 buttons
- 16-Bit IDE Interface for internal 2.5" harddisk, 44 pins
- Floppy Disk Drive 3.5" DD internal, 880 KB AMIGA, 720 KB MS-DOS
- Interfaces: serial RS-232c (modem), parallel (printer), external floppy drive, 2 mouse/joystick ports, video RGB (monitor), video composite (TV, video recorder), RF modulator (TV antenna), stereo audio
- PCMCIA-V2.0 16-Bit interface for RAM (max. 4 MB, 16 bit), Ethernet, or other expansion cards
- CPU Slot 150-pin internal, for memory expansion or accelerator board with bigger processor
- AmigaOS 3.1 with preemptive multitasking

Technical specifications subject to change without announcement.

**Special: HardDisk version comes with 170 MB harddisk**

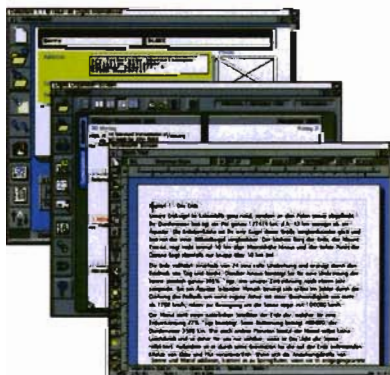
### Software Bonus!!

Each AMIGA 1200 comes with the Magic software bundle, containing:

- Word Processor—WordWorth v4SE
- Spreadsheet—TurboCalc v3.5
- Database—DataStore v1.1
- Graphics program—Photogenics v1.2SE
- Paint program—PersonalPaint v6.4
- Organiser v1.1
- Games—Pinball Mania and Whizz

### HardDisk EXTRA!

The harddisk version of the A1200HD also comes with Multimedia Authoring System Scala MM300



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# FEEDBACK

## AMIGA!

### It's the Swiss Army knife of computers.

Dear AC,

I have just received the February issue of your excellent magazine. I enjoy the tutorials and product information as much as the news. However, I have a question about the cover. What is an AMIGOID?

This might be linguistically correct but it doesn't quite sound right.

AMIGANS, AMIGIANS, AMIGANITES, AMIGERS (as in surfers) all sound more dynamic than AMIGOIDS. AMIGOID? NOIDS? VOIDS? FREUDS? None sound very good. Perhaps we need to redefine ourselves. A contest?

Thanks for listening.

Yours sincerely,

Hal Brulhart

Ponoka AB Canada

P.S. Perhaps we could call ourselves AMIGANAUTS, or AMIGACRATS (as in technocrats, or aristocrats. Collectively, we could be called AMIGANITES or AMIGAPHILES.

AMIGOIDS.. must have been thought up in an IP - free zone.

Dear AC,

I'm writing this letter hoping it will be printed in your magazine so your readers may get an interesting viewpoint on the condition of the Amiga and maybe to give some validation to this amazing computer. Ever since I first saw my cousin's A500 in '93 I have been hooked. I've owned so many of them from my first A1000 that was given to me by a teacher at a high school to the 3000T I now own loaded with a Toaster, Retina, AD516 sound card—you get the idea.

I, as well as so many others out there, went through the whole "do I wait or sell it now" question when the Amiga first went under. After some bad experiences with a mail order repair service in '95, I decided to unload everything I had. You see I've always used PCs and Macs since the early 80s and always preferred the Amiga because it was so ridiculously superior. But I resigned myself to the fact that it was only a matter of time before it was obsolete.

Now stick with me here, I know where you think this is going. We all read the letters from the fiercely loyal Amigans and it eats out our insides that such a great machine could be sold, marketed, and supported so poorly in the past.

Anyway, it wasn't a month after my last A2000 was sold, I applied for a position at a junior high school in Bow N.H. I got a shock that nearly knocked me on the floor my first day of school. I walked into the library and there it was in a small cubicle surrounded by monitors, VCRs, video tapes, and piles of floppy disks—a Video Toaster 4000! Well, at the staff orientation, those of us who were "newbies" were given the speech on how progressive this school is on technology, the media, the "information Superhighway" and all the "electronic classroom" visions of the future. I didn't even know this when I applied!

It seems this Toaster had been the central focus of the entire staff and students. Every day some student was in that room learning or using it to create some great cartoon or slide presentation or

even a comical news program. It was quite a head trip! I had just gone through months of slowly letting go of this computer, obsessing over which one I should keep, if I should keep one, etc. Only to end up getting paid to use one!

Well, here's the real kicker. They built a high school in Bow and it opened this past September. This is an upper middle class town and the people here knew what they wanted for technology to go in the school when it was designed. For a school of 400 students we have 200+ PC workstations, 10 servers, distance learning over the internet, computer designed auditorium, video production suites... you get the idea. If you're from this area of New Hampshire, you've heard of this school and what it's got.

I decided to apply for and was lucky enough to get a job as the Computer Technology Assistant. My boss, who worked at the middle school (Yup, the Amiga user responsible for getting the Toaster) decided that the Toaster was needed here as a switcher for our television studio. It's used everyday for our in-school cable news broadcast. Not to mention anytime a video camera is turned on here, the students always find a reason to use the "cool video stuff" on it.

Mind you we have a couple of "big buck" Avid/Targa 2000 systems and your "whiz bang" Pentium MMX video capture workstations. But what can you buy out there that can overlay graphics onto video IN REAL TIME? ...NOTHING! The whole point of this is to remind us that the Amiga will never disappear.

Even if it was never bought by Gateway and third party companies stopped supporting it. This computer can do one thing that NONE of the others can do. No, not multitask, the Pentium's speed and brute force can do that now. Real-time 3D rendering? No, my 40 dollar S3 Virge video card can do that in all its "looks as good as it costs" glory. I can't find a simple genlock for the PC without spending a fortune for anything that approaches time-



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base correction. They are so main-stream but when video is involved you need about 5 grand and nothing short of 200 megahertz!

That's why the Amiga will always be pulled out of the closet or sought out in your magazine ads. So what if it never gets anywhere near as popular as the PC. I don't want it to ever be mistaken as a "mass produced -clone of the month- word processing - bloated code - IRQ conflicting" machine.

I know, I know it's easy to jump on the PC bashing bandwagon. But I use PCs everyday. And I do like them. I build them as a hobby. Just the speed makes 'em a blast to use. But what always hits me square in the face is this: How many people out there have a trusty, old, rusted, banged up wrench in their tool box? Would you throw it away for that reason? No, it works. You're accustomed to how it feels. Same with the Amiga. It was never in danger of disappearing. It's the Swiss Army knife of computers.

Go ahead, put a Video Toaster sticker on it. Even if people don't know what's inside, they know what it does. Case in point? I'd like to share something that was funny and encouraging to me because it drives the point home so clearly.

We recently had some students from Georgia visit our school. We had them "guest host" as reporters on the news program. As a young lady was sitting down on the set, I asked if they have a video studio in their school. She said, "Sure do!" Then she asks in a thick southern accent, "Do y-a-a'll have one of them Toasters?" Now I ask you, would you assume this young lady uses a computer for anything other than her homework? Does it matter? She knows which one is used for television. Enough said.

Thank you,  
Robert Jacques  
Bow High School  
Bow NH  
email: rjacques@bow.k12.nh.us

Dear AC,

I'm writing to say 'thanks' for running some tutorials on Aladdin 4D in the last few issues. I have been using LightWave since version 3.5, but stopped upgrading at version 4 because version five was missing many features of the PC version and NewTek was not into supporting things I felt were needed such as CyberGfx, CyberGL and PowerPC. While NewTek is

now rumored to be thinking of supporting LightWave again, I decided this summer to take Nova Design up on their special offer on Aladdin 5. I figure if Nova has stuck with the Amiga this long and continues to put out first-rate products such as the new ImageFX 3, then they will make Aladdin into an outstanding product too.

One problem for me is finding the same range of information as there is out there for LightWave and Imagine. I hope that future tutorials on Aladdin will cover more of Aladdin's advanced features such as fountains. I understand that Nova is looking at re-releasing the 'Rubbing the Lamp' newsletter in some form, but for people like me who are just getting started with the program, AC's articles are great.

I'm especially glad to hear Nova is going to support the PowerUP cards now that a PowerPC add-on is in development for the SAS/C by one of the authors still at SAS (a beta version has been available for free since late December on his web-site). With PowerUP cards for the A1200 in production as I write this, you can bet one is on my 'must-get' list right behind the ImageFX 3 upgrade. News that Phase5 is designing multi-PowerPC cards is certainly good news for the Amiga's continued use as a high-end production tool.

On another topic, I liked reading the article on Bill Williams in the February issue. Though I never got the chance to play his creations, and there were more than I thought, it was interesting to read about the person behind Mindwalker. It's too bad the world is losing his talent. I would like to see more of these kinds of articles looking at some of the people who brought us Amiga owners a rich creative heritage. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,  
Zoltan Hunt  
Toronto Ontario Canada

*There are now two authors providing tutorials for Aladdin 4D and we could always use more. It is our hope that many of the professional and amateur users in the Amiga community will offer articles on areas of this and other software and hardware for the Amiga. Our job is simply to keep the communication flowing.*

Dear AC,

Two items in your March issue have prompted this letter. The editor's call for Amiga applications and Shamm's urging for community involvement provide me with this twoofer.

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On my front porch an Amiga 600 is driving a 10 inch TV monitor with a slide show which sends Valentine greetings to my neighbors — by name. I started this practice with Thanksgiving and continued through Christmas, New Year, Martin Luther King's Birthday...a new show for each. Next week it will be President's Day.

The show includes color cycled pics and animations, all generated with DPaint IV. The show is driven by an ancient program, Elan Performer.

Everything is designed on an A1200 in my office and stored on a PCMCLA card which slips into the A600 on the porch. The A600 fits nicely into a table (yard furniture) which sits next to a yard chair holding the monitor. The two are connected by a single wire from the A600 composite video out.

The PC card is an SRAM card which stores 2 Meg when configured by OS 3.0 as a storage device. Everything is on it, making going from A1200 to A600 a cinch.

The show runs 24 hours/day continuously (with no disk access) and is looped by Performer to recycle every 5 minutes.

So much for twoofers.

Sincerely,  
Dwin R Craig  
Frederick MD

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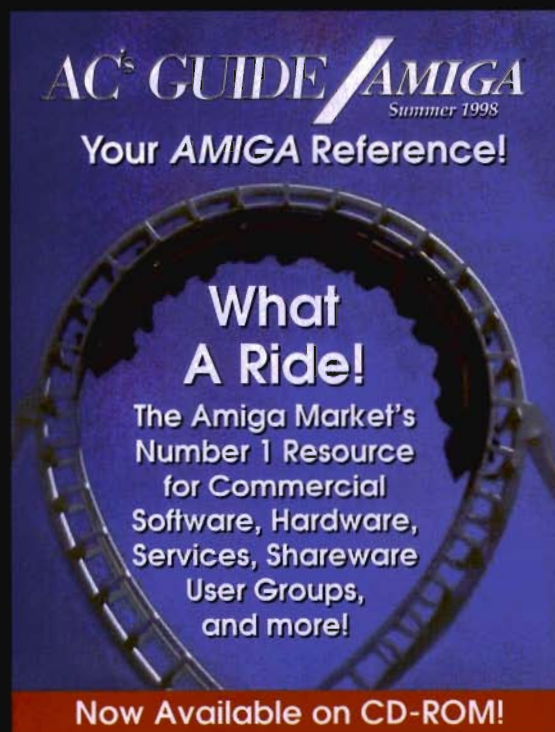
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# **"Oxypatcher," Air Mail Pro 2.0, TurboCalc V5.0, Vote in AAA Awards, phase 5 and BoXer unite, and much more!**

# **NEW PRODUCTS**

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## **Dimensions Computers to Distribute the Oxyron Patcher**

New Generation Software of Germany has authorized Dimensions Computers of the USA to distribute and promote their "Oxypatcher" software. Oxypatcher is a program to enhance the performance of any Amiga using an 040 or 060 processor.

The Oxyron Patcher handles calls to the processor's FPU (68882 math co-processor) resulting in a performance increase of up to 20 times. Oxypatcher is currently the only software package available for all 040/060 users. phase 5 accelerators have Cyberpatcher which, according to Dimensions Computers, only works in conjunction with a phase 5 accelerator card. Dimensions further claims that, in virtually all cases, Oxypatcher is equal to or faster than even Cyberpatcher. More information on the Oxyron patcher is available in German and English at: <http://homepages.microdata.de/~michael/OXYPAT.HTM>

*Dimensions Computers can be contacted by dealers, distributors, and endusers seeking more information on the Oxyron Patcher by the following: World Wide Web: <http://nrex.net/dimensions/>, E-Mail: [dimensions@nrex.net](mailto:dimensions@nrex.net), and Tel: (888) 534-6367*

## **Air Mail Pro V2.0**

Toysoft Development Inc. has announced the release of Air Mail Pro v2.0 for the Magic User Interface (MUI). Air Mail Pro is an internet email program for sending and receiving messages using SMTP and POP protocols. New features included are: choice of three types of

interface - button, small icon or large icon; more preferences for user customization, multiple ASCII signatures, and automatic notification when a user receives your message (only works if both users are using Air Mail Pro). Additional forms are included such as the Forms creator to create your own forms, APOP authentication, Mail Peek to screen your messages before downloading, the ability to repress recipient list, an interface for PGP, completely localized for international users, and ARexx for automated mailing are also included.

The New Address Book database includes full postal mailing address, email address and can include a picture of the user. It can sort messages by name, subject, date, size or mail status. The New function will let you mark messages in the mail-boxes. A New TrashCan and SentBox folders have been added for message history keeping. A new Helper preference has been added to support MIME formatted messages.

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For more information, please contact your local dealer or Toysoft Development Inc., 131 - 64 Ave NW Calgary Alberta Canada T2K 0L9, Tel: 403-680-1656, Email: [danny@toysoft-dev.com](mailto:danny@toysoft-dev.com) or visit <http://www.spots.ab.ca/~toysoft> or <http://www.toysoft-dev.com>

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## **Aminet 23**

Aminet 23 dated February, 1998 contains nearly 1 gigabyte (uncompressed) of software in thousands of archives. Since the release of Aminet CD 22 in December 1997, more than 500 MB of new software has appeared. Suggested retail DM 25.00. Stefan Ossowskis Schatztruhe, Gesselleschaft fur Software mbH, VeronikastraÙe 33, 45131 Essen Germany, Tel: 011 21 78 8778, Fax: 011 21 79 8447, Email: [stefano@schatztruhe.de](mailto:stefano@schatztruhe.de) or WWW: [www.schatztruhe.de](http://www.schatztruhe.de)

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## Randomize has MicroniK and Amiga International Products

Randomize is now a source for MicroniK products. Randomize carries the full line of Infinitiv Towers - from the 1200 tower case to the 1500. They also carry the Classic Tower cases for the A2000, A3000 and A4000.

Amiga International products are also available in Canada from Randomize. According to a Randomize executive, Randomize has been selected as the Canadian distributor for their A4000 Towers and A1200 computers.

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## AAA Awards Voting!

Umeå, Sweden. The public voting for the AAA Awards 1997 will be open from March 1st through March 31st. Cast your vote for those you feel have done the most for the AMIGA during 1997 at <http://www.aaa-awards.org> or +46-[0]90-710020.

The winners will be announced and awarded at these locations: AAA Award International, Saturday May 16, 11:00 AM during the World of Amiga '98 at the Novotel Exhibition Centre in London, England and at the AAA Award Sverige on Saturday April 4, 3:00 PM at the AmiTech '98 Wasahallarna in Stockholm, Sweden.

For more information, contact Mattias Wadenstein, Information Manager, [information@aaa-awards.org](mailto:information@aaa-awards.org). Or you can contact the AAA Awards Director, Martin Sahlén by email at [martin.sahlen@amiga-cg.se](mailto:martin.sahlen@amiga-cg.se).

AAA Awards C/O Martin Sahlén, Skolgatan 14, 903 22 Umeå, Sweden, [www.aaa-awards.org](http://www.aaa-awards.org).



## Index & phase 5

Index Information Ltd, Blittersoft, and phase 5 Digital Products have announced their co-operation on PowerPC technologies

for the upcoming Amiga-compatible BoXeR system by Index Information Ltd/Blittersoft. As a result, the BoXeR system will be shipping with a PowerPC expansion slot on which a PowerPC-based accelerator can be installed. The PowerPC expansion slot will be fully software compatible to the PowerUP accelerators from phase 5.

The hope by these three is this "will further support the migration of the Amiga towards the PowerPC, and that we can provide a unified interface for software developers and for the users." They will use the compatible API (Application Programmers Interface) to ensure software developed for PowerUP will work on the PowerPC accelerators for the BoXeR and make the standard more attractive for Amiga software vendors to support.

"This co-operation helps strengthen an emerging standard which will allow a wide range of breathtaking new products," stated Wolf Dietrich of phase 5. digital products. The PowerUP technology, which will be used in the PowerPC accelerators for the BoXeR is the base for a new generation of high-tech products, such as CPU cards with multiple PowerPC processor and full multiprocessing software support, which will be appearing later in 1998 according to phase 5.

The BoXeR is promised to also incorporate a graphics card expansion slot which is compatible with the one available on phase 5's CyberstormPPC and MkIII accelerators. "By jointly choosing a common performance level for the next generation of GFX cards, together we can set a unified minimum standard which software developers can rely on," stated Dietrich. "This will quickly increase the number of applications using highest resolution and the hardware 3D acceleration, including quite a number of fascinating new games."

Paul Lesurf of Blittersoft, the worldwide distributor of the BoXeR system stated, "Whilst the BoXeR is very much a product to provide a diverse range of Amiga systems, we feel it is important to maintain compatibility with the leading edge peripherals. phase 5 products are very much in that category, and we hope this co-operation will be the first of many, to allow the Amiga community to receive the BoXeR design with even more confidence."

"We are very pleased to announce the ongoing work to increase the flexibility of the BoXeR and the work with phase 5 will allow us to deliver a wider range of performance options to the customer", said Mick Tinker of Index. "BoXeR systems will

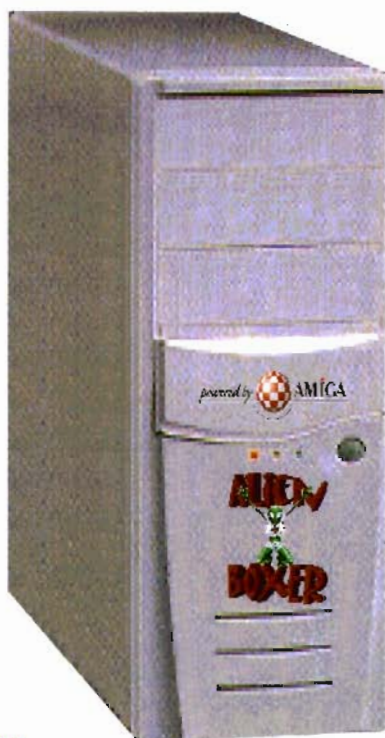




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### Warm Hearts for ABackup 5.20

A new version of ABackup (release 5.20) was uploaded to Aminet on Valentine's day. According to the author, ABackup sports a clean interface which does not require any additional library or graphical system like MUL, plus the following features:

- Both full and selective backup and restore operations. You can select the files by name of pattern, by date, by protection bits, but also one by one. You can also record a selection, and get it back later.
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SyQuest cartridge for example), to an archive file, or to a SCSI tape drive. Optional data compression (using the XPK system or via an external program), data encryption, verification, and archive bit setting.

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- Allows full operation automatization: you can, for example, start a backup just by a double-click over an icon.

This new ABackup version provides support for removable disk systems like SyQuest, ZIP and Jaz units. Your backup can now require a few removable disks instead of a huge pile of floppies and be much faster. Before using them with ABackup, removable disks must be partitioned with HDToolBox (in order to create the disk's RigidDiskBlock).

For more information, contact Denis.Gounelle@wanadoo.fr.

### Cronus Liquidation

In a letter from Fred Fish in late January, Cronus announced that they were leaving the Amiga marketplace, "...we recently find ourselves in the position of not having sufficient ongoing sales to really justify remaining in the Amiga marketplace at this time. So a couple of months ago, we made the rather painful decision that Cronus would stop reselling Amiga products, and with the exception of future AmigaOS versions of Geek Gadgets, stop producing our own Amiga products. Of course this is not an irreversible decision. If for some reason in the future it makes sense to reenter the marketplace we will certainly do so. This is not a loss of faith in the Amiga itself, but purely a business decision based on the bottom line."

You can find a listing for the products Cronus has left as well as the conditions of their sale at their web site, [www.ninemoons.com](http://www.ninemoons.com), email at [info@ninemoons.com](mailto:info@ninemoons.com), or contact them by mail at Cronus, 26233 North 45th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85024.

•AC•

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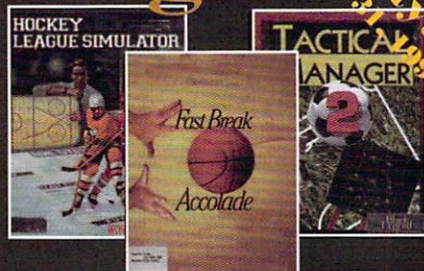
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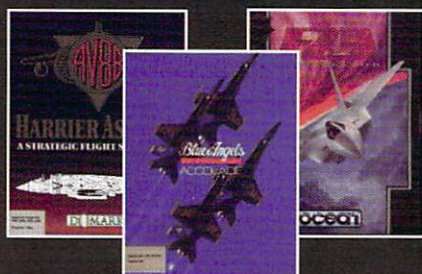


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# Blended Bitmap/Procedural Variations:

## A4D Tutorial # 17

By R. Shamms Mortier



Nova Design's Aladdin 4D was the first application, on the Amiga or any other platform, to be able to map any number of multiple textures to any selected object. I and others suspect, in fact, that a number of non-Amiga 3D applications got wind of what Aladdin could do, and either reversed engineered it, or discovered how their application could do it. Now you will find this attribute in most of the medium to high end applications, but, Aladdin 4D remains the first on the block. Greg Gorby, Aladdin's creator, built this attribute in without knowing anything about what other 3D applications could or could not do. In fact, he never looked at or studied any other application, except for VideoScape.

Aladdin's latest release from Nova Design still features this capability. It is a capability sustained by several different A4D options, each of which you should know in order to design the most interesting textures for your objects. Since we have already investigated A4D's procedural textures in previous tutorials, it's time to enumerate the ways that texture sandwiches, built of any number or combination of procedurals and/or bitmaps, can be constructed.

Just what are the options? You should use this tutorial information only after having read and worked through the A4D documentation.

### Edit Texture Requester

First, let's recount how to get to the requester that allows us to assign mapping parameters in the first place. This is the Edit Texture Requester, and here's how to access it.

1. Create and select the object on your A4D workscreen.
2. Go to the Object menu and select Textures. The Texture list Selection menu will pop up. Click on New, and name the new texture list in the Edit Texture list that pops up.
3. All of the options you may want to target for the selected object are here. See Figure 1.

Let's forget animation right now, and concentrate upon the aspects of this requester that deal solely with texture assignments. There are several.

At the top of the requester is the Edit Member area. There is a "1" here by default, because, by default, you are assigning your first (and maybe only) texture to the selected object. On the right of this area is a backward/forward arrow, like a VCR control. The backward one is ghosted out, because you only have 1 texture channel at the moment.

The forward control however is active. If you click on it, you will increment the channel number to 2, and add another channel on top of that for each click. Each time you add a texture channel, you add another possible texture to the mix. There is no limit to the number of textures you can

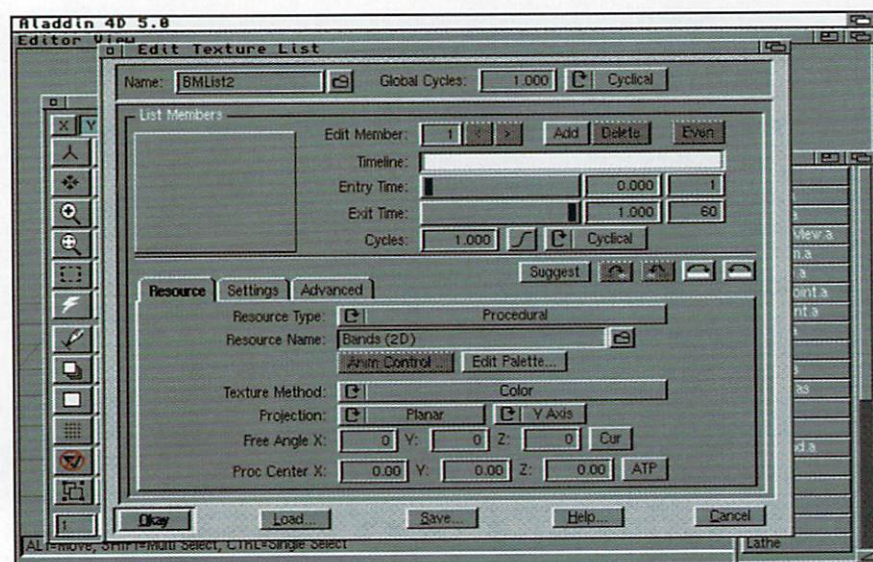


Figure 1. Work in the Edit Texture List to define a textures parameters for specific channel layers.



have addressing any object. In an animation, these textures can replace each other over time (another Aladdin first that other 3D software has since emulated).

If the Edit member area tells us what channel we are working in, then we also need to have another control that tells us what the makeup of that channel will be. Will it be a procedural texture, or a bitmap? To assign the quality of the selected channel, we use the three tabbed areas below: Resource, Settings, and Advanced. The Advanced options deal with setting the sizes and number of tiled repeats a texture places on the object.

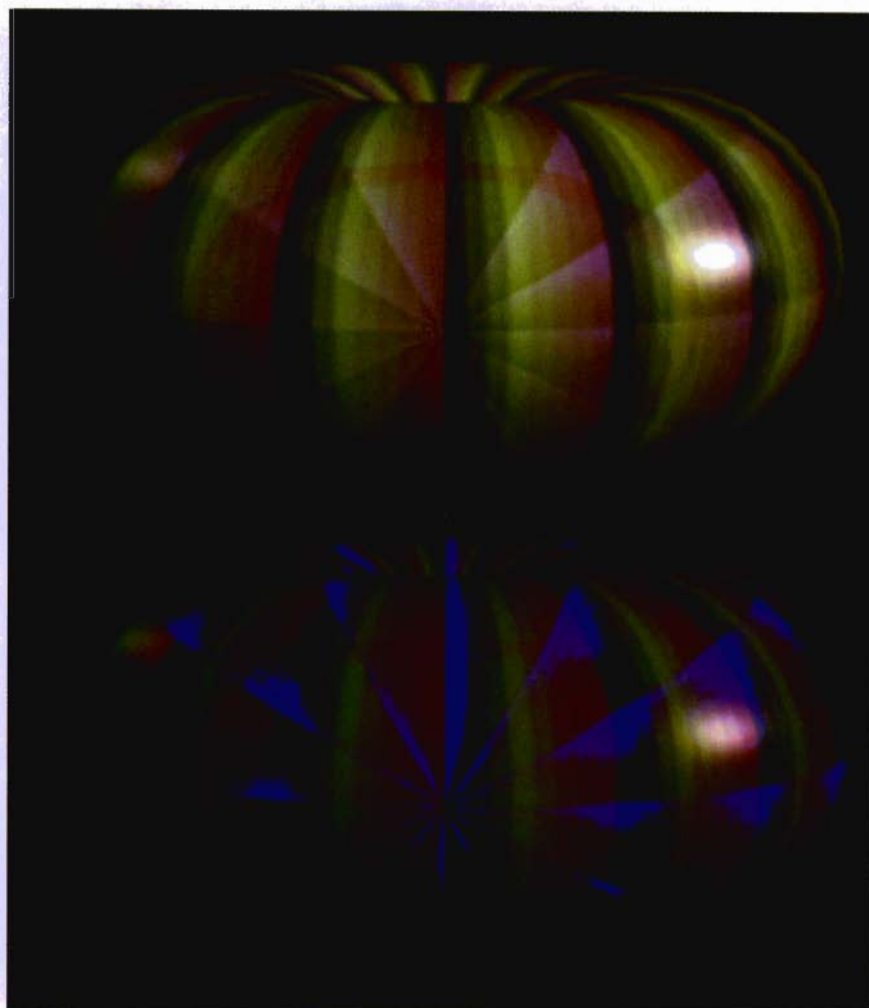
### Resource Tab Parameters for Texture Development

Under the Resources tab are options for Resource Type, Texture Method, and Projection. Resource Type allows us to select whether the texture for the specified channel number will be a procedural (and which one) or a bitmap (and where it is stored on the hard drive). Texture method settings determine the way in which the texture will be used. Your options are:

- Color
- Reflection
- Genlock
- Decal
- Bump Map
- Opacity Map
- Hardness
- Illumination
- Alpha Channel

Complete descriptions of these options can be found in the A4D documentation, though our interest in this tutorial concerns Color and Bump Map options. We will do further tutorials that deal with other listed options in the future.

Projection options are important because they let Aladdin know how the texture is to be addressed or projected onto the surface of the selected object in that specific numbered channel. We could have multiple channels, for instance, and use the same texture projected differently in each channel to create a multi-projection sandwich. The result would



**Figure 2.** This object has a three channel layered texture. The same procedural (2D Bands) was used in each of the three channels, but layered with different projections (Planar, Spherical, and Cylindrical). They are all at 50% Strength and Color in the top example. In the bottom example, Color is set to 100% for each channel, and spherical Strength is at 75%, with the other two channels at 35% Strength. Although 2D Bands is a very simple procedural by itself, you can see how complex it gets when addressed in a sandwich with different layered mappings.

be a layered effect showing the combined projections of the same texture interweaving with itself. Selecting the mapping axis also plays a big part in the final look. See Figure 2.

### Settings Tab Parameters for Texture Development

Under the Settings tab, the two most important items relate to how much the qualities of that layer are combined with any other layers, concerning both Color (how much color from this texture will effect the total color mix) and its Strength. Whether you are using Color maps or Bump maps, Color and Strength settings are very important.

For Color mapping, the reasons are more obvious. Setting the amount of color and its Strength to a texture channel will make the object brilliant or tinted and diffused. With Bump mapping however, there are different considerations.

A4D is one of the only 3D applications that allows you to apply a color bump map to an object in one operation. Adjusting the amount of color that comes from the texture allows you to do this. The Intensity of a Bump Map will make it appear more or less 3D. Usually, when using the Bump Map option for a channel, leave the Strength setting high, and adjust the color as needed.



Figure 3. These objects were all textured with combination procedurals and bitmaps. Each of the groups used the same bitmap with a variety of altered procedurals. The variance was also caused by mapping both the procedural and bitmap to different axis, and using both Color and Bump Mapping on the same object.

If you want the Bump Map to be used only for an actual perceived 3D effect, while the color is being applied from another texture in a separate channel, set the color slider in the Settings tab to zero, and push the Strength all the way up.

### Advanced Tab Parameters for Texture Development

Each texture you use has its own parameters for size and other factors, and these parameters are placed under this tab. If you are using a layer sandwich of textures, be sure to

explore the alteration of those parameters. One small change can make all the difference. There is no way to delineate exactly what you should do, since that depends on an infinite number of variables. The best way to get used to these settings and how they alter the image is to explore them in each case. When you get something you like, you can Save the settings involved. That way, you can apply the same settings to different textures in another project.

*Important! Be sure to hit the Return key when you reset size parameters.*

### Conclusions

Our Aladdin 4D tutorials are meant to introduce you to A4D concepts and possibilities, and are not meant to suggest that we are covering all of the options. That's up to you in your exploration time. The subject of layered textured mapping, even narrowly specified with just color and bump options, is absolutely infinite, and the variation can be a focus of exploration for years. So take your time, and start to explore the true potential of Aladdin 4D. By the way, the latest edition from Nova Design is now version 5.

•AC•





## A quick serving of tasty extras

By Nick Cook



### OUIJA Board Mouse Pad

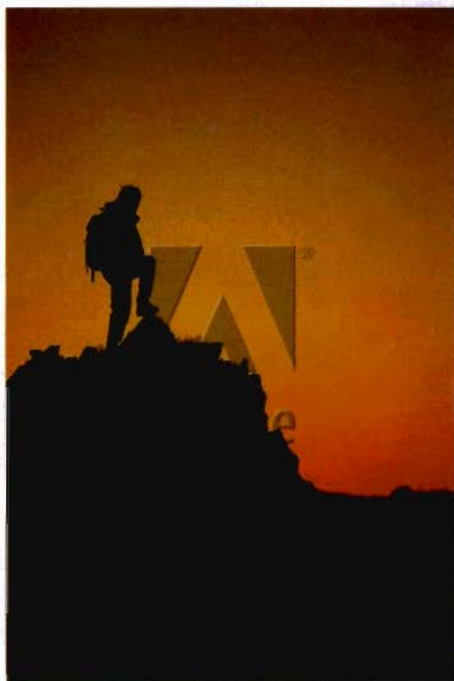
I'm not into cutesy computer accessories, but I burst out laughing in my local Barnes & Noble store when I spied this mouse mat. Now your mouse can cruise over the image of that famous "Mysterious Oracle", the Ouija Board. No matter what the platform, there are times when you wonder if your computer is attached to the Great Beyond. . .

The mat is pretty hefty and somewhat larger than the standard one. It is also made from recycled rubber (the company will recycle your old mouse mat if you mail it to them). Along with the Ouija Board, Wonderwerks puts out a mat with the image of the children's book character, "Curious George". I'm using the Ouija board mouse mat with my work PC, which

lately has taken to spewing out the cryptic and unhelpful "General Protection Error" at the drop of a hat. Seems apropos somehow.

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### Adobe Image Library

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have. Fortunately, Adobe has inaugurated their Image Library, a collection of beautiful professional photographs suitable for print or for screen. Each image is available in four formats: RGB High-Resolution, RGB Low-Resolution, RGB Multimedia Optimized (fits a 640 x 480 screen), and CMYK High-Resolution.

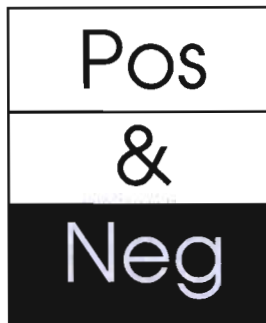
The photos are royalty-free; once you purchase the photo, you can use it as often as you want. Categorized CDs of 100 images cost \$299.00, or you can pick up the whole collection if you've got a spare \$6,749 laying around. Adobe also permits purchase and downloading of a single photograph via the Internet for \$79.99 (the price goes up to \$99.99 in May 1998). Obviously, a CD is more cost effective. However, if you only need an image here and there, from different categories, the Net approach may be the way.

I had no trouble accessing the web site with AWeb 3.1. Unfortunately, Adobe uses Netscape's Secure Socket Layer (SSL), which is incompatible with the US version of Miami. So you'll have to use Netscape or Explorer to buy single images. Phooey.

You could also buy the Adobe Photo Library Resource Book, a 288 page, full color catalog (which includes a CD of sample images) for \$19.95. If you're used to the junky images contained on many low-cost photo collections, you'll stare bug-eyed at Adobe's quality images.

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# PixPro



Is there life  
in this old  
Amiga program?  
You Betcha!

By R. Shamms Mortier

I am continually amazed by the ongoing functionality of Amiga software, even the packages that haven't seen an upgrade in years. Perhaps many of these vintage applications will have a regenerated life, a next revision, when the Gateway ball starts to roll.

# Pixelz

# Pixelz

# Pixelz

# Pixelz

# Pixelz

Figure 1. From the top down, here's the 2D art we start with to explore PixPro's Pos and Neg functionality: Black on white, white on black, color on black, color on white, and a gradient filled text on black.

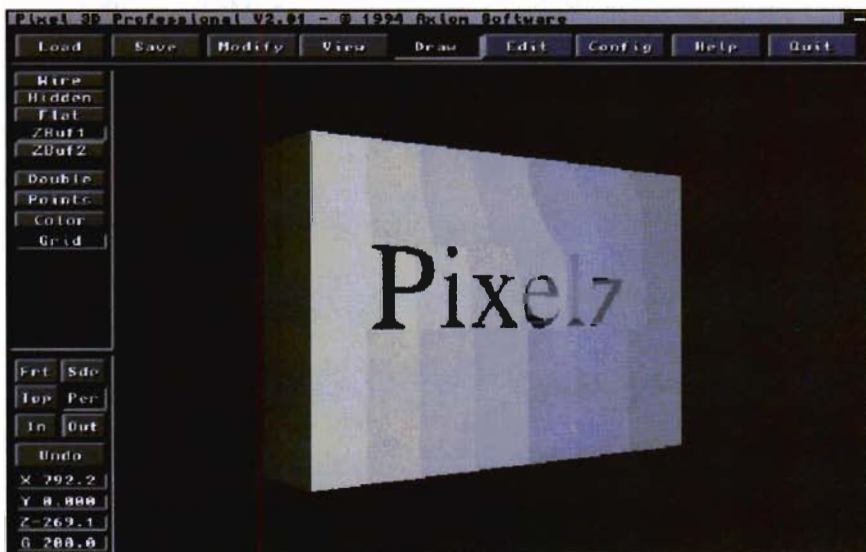


Figure 2. The black on white text block is imported into PixPro and extruded. The result is a carved block with negative letters.



Figure 3. The color on black 2D option extrusion was added in PixPro.



Even if they don't however, Amiga users may be getting a lot of use out of them well into the twenty-first century. That's because they were designed to do a task, to offer creative options, and to perform flawlessly under pressure. There are a good number of packages that fit this bill, software still being discount marketed by various vendors.

A prime example is Pixel 3D Professional from the no-longer-contactable Axiom Software. "PixPro", as it is affectionately called, has formed the basis of many of my articles for *Amazing Computing/Amiga* in the last years, and there's still a few that will be coming your way. PixPro is a workhorse, and if you don't have it, seek it out (many of the advertisers whose messages appear regularly in *Amazing* offer it at a steal).

### What PixPro Does

In a digital nutshell, PixPro translates 2D bitmap artwork into vector line shapes that can be used to generate 3D objects. It does this quickly, and with a minimum learning curve expected.

Once the 2D bitmap art assumes a new 3D personality, the 3D object can be saved in a number of diverse formats. This includes two very important options: LightWave (object and/or scene files), and DXF.

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The LightWave option has become increasingly important now that LightWave is a part of the Windows and Mac communities as well as the Amiga. After all, most Amiga users, especially graphics pros, have either or

both a PC and/or Mac sitting next to their Amigas. The next generation Amigas from Amiga Inc. and its licensees will support the PowerPC (see *Amazing Computing/Amiga* March, 1998) and possibly the Pentium, so



results in nicely hued text. 3D



Figure 4. White text on black and extruded gives a perfect similar surface for later texture mapping.

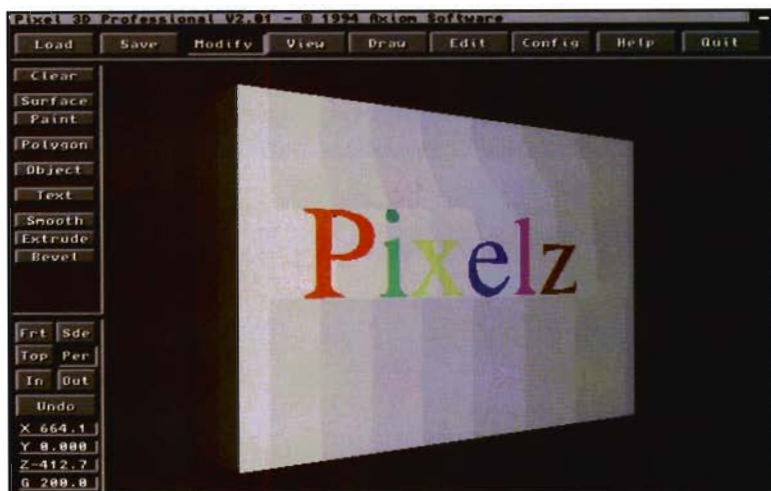


Figure 5. Colored 2D art on white results in colored text on a background block, good for a 3D sign in a virtual reality environment. Each letter is actually a 3D object, so cutting into the block would reveal color where each letter is extruded.



Figure 6. The black on white art, once ported to LightWave and rendered, results in a high end block object.



Figure 7. The same block seen in Figure 6 is given a smooth and subtle texture in LightWave.

PixPro is still alive to act as a bridge between systems.

As for the DXF option, that's even more of a bridge. Although in latest-news 3D terms DXF is not an up-to-date object format (for one reason, its inability to accept certain types of mapping functions), it remains in strong use as a 3D format that can be ported to loads of other 3D software on a multitude of platforms. So there's PixPro again, life after life after life.

PixPro has actually been ported in two versions to Windows, so Amiga PixPro users also enjoy the option of being trained to use a Windows application if and when necessary. There's more to PixPro than simple 2D-3D translation, but that is the subject we'll focus upon this time.

### Pos and Neg?

Perhaps you thought that the Pos and Neg phrase in the heading of this article referred to "Pros and Cons", a suggested critique of the PixPro software. That's not the case. What I want to talk about is the way PixPro handles the two ends of the 3D spectrum, positive and negative 2D graphics translation, and what 2D configurations are interpreted as one or the other.

What I call a "positive" translation is the 2D graphic translated into an expected 3D object, as for example, a line of text translated into 3D letters. A "negative" translation occurs when 2D artwork is translated as a hole (or negative space) sunk in an extruded shape. An example of this would be a sign whose letters are cut out of the sign material. The question is, how can you prepare your 2D art for PixPro translation so that one or the other outcome will result.

### The Answer in Black and White

The solution is quite simple, once you understand PixPro's interpretive capabilities. First, any 2D art loaded into PixPro will have either or both black (100% RGB Black) and non-Black components. Black is read as transpar-



ent, and all other colors are read as "positive". Positive colors are translated into vector shapes that can then be treated as objects. Black is treated as a negative shape, which either means a transparency region or a hole in another object.

The second most important thing to remember about PixPro is that every distinct color in an imported piece of 2D art is treated as a unique shape which has the potential to become a solitary shape that generates its own 3D object. Why is this vital knowledge?

If your 2D artwork has components filled with gradient color, transitions of one color to another, PixPro sees each color as a separate object. At the opening of the importation process in PixPro, you are asked whether or not to "Smooth the Object" being imported. "Yes" is the common answer, because that gets rid of any jagged anomalies that were brought over from the 2D world.

In that smoothing process, large gaps can be placed between any two adjacent colors, because each color is seen as the basis for a unique 3D shape. Instead of your art having smooth 3D gradient colors, it becomes instead translated as a series of unique smoothed 3D shape foundations, not at all what you might have expected, and not very pretty in most cases.

Of course, you can refuse the smoothing process, but PixPro will still see the 2D art as composed of as many potential 3D shapes as there are colors, no big help. The answer? Don't generate 2D art with anything but solid colors for PixPro. You can always texture map a gradient in the targeted 3D application.

Take a good look at the visual examples that accompany this article for a more intuitive understanding of what I mean. PixPro, its functionality never ends. In future articles we'll look at it again, as a beveling tool and as a software platform for other creative uses.

•AC•



Figure 8. Yuk! Here's why not to use gradient fills in 2D art meant for PixPro translation.



Figure 9. Very smooth results can be achieved in a LightWave render of any PixPro output.

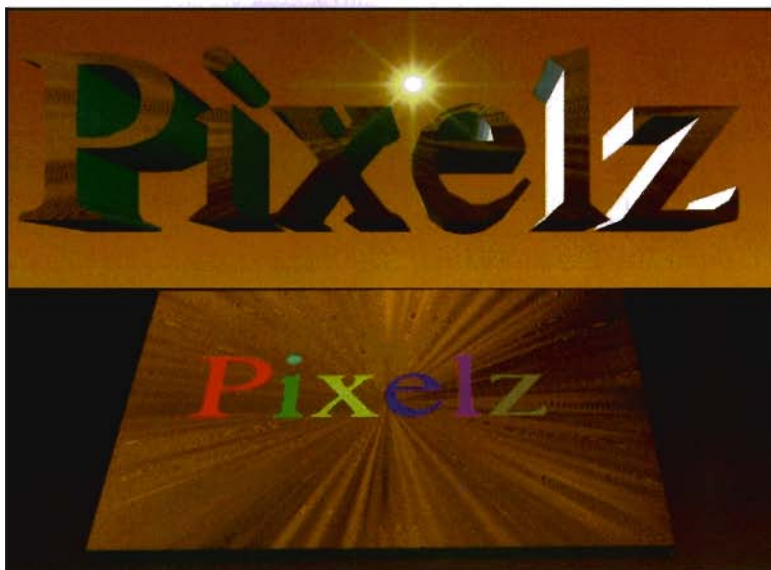


Figure 10. Here's a combination of positive and negative objects rendered and textured within LightWave.





# CREATE A LIGHT & SOUND SHOW - WITHOUT MAGIC MUSHROOMS OR FUNNY CIGARETTES

*By Nick Cook*

## What exactly is a "music animation system"?

MindEYE is a music animation system. Says so, right on the manual cover. What exactly is a "music animation system"? MindEYE is a product which defies a simple, single line description.

You may have ridden the Disney attraction "Carousel of Progress" (all together now "there's a great big beautiful tomorrow"). In the first scene, the audience sat in front of a wall constructed of prismatic plastic panels. Red, green, and blue lights pulsed in response to various sounds and music cues. The gizmo called a "color organ" handled the lights. It converted the acoustic energy of sound into electrical energy. In one way, MindEYE is a color organ for the Amiga. But it's a color organ on steroids.

MindEYE's hardware is a small, 4.5 inch by 2.5 inch, rectangular box wrapped in flashy foil reminiscent of an old "Star Trek" set. The box contains a built-in microphone on the front (there's also an RCA jack in back), as well as volume and gain level

knobs. When plugged into the Amiga's joystick port with the included cable, MindEYE's box functions as a sound sampler for the software.

The program, named simply "Eye," takes the sound and converts it into eye-popping graphics. It can run straight off the floppy; hard drive installation requires copying Eye to the desired directory. Some additional setup, such as selecting a directory of IFF pictures, is done inside the program. Although the standard Install program is not included, getting MindEYE up and running is a cinch.

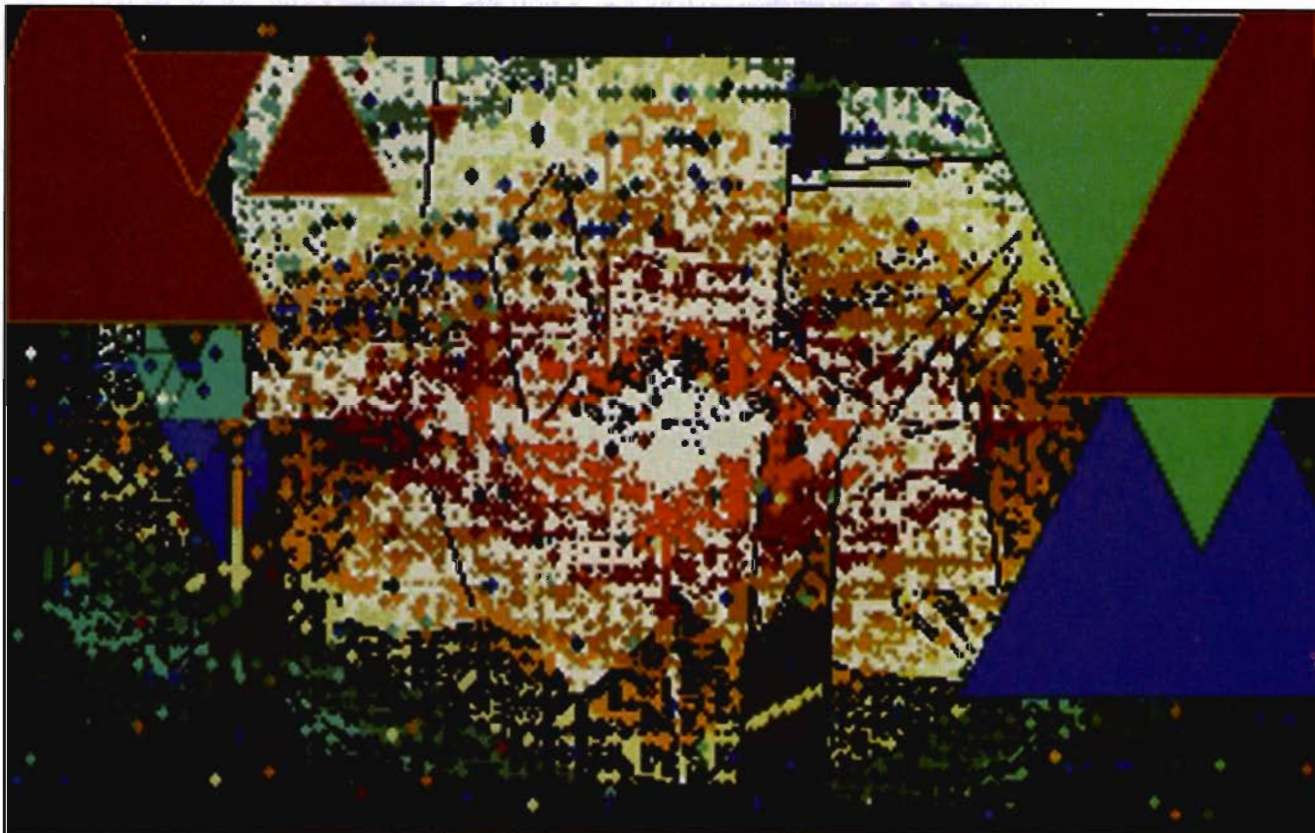
The software operates in any native Amiga graphics mode. Although it ran on my Picasso II graphics card using CyberGraphx, the Picasso's screen refreshes where unacceptably slow. Nevertheless, MindEYE blasts out a heck of a show, even on a lowly 32 color lo-res screen.

Just small adjustments of the sampler's volume and gain controls can significantly alter MindEYE's on-screen effects. The program's sensitivity, such as to the music's bass and

treble, can also be modified by the software. The hardware and software controls provide virtually unlimited responsiveness combinations.

Eye is made up of four different "environments" which react dynamically to the sound: vista, visual, fader, and modifier. Vistas combine graphics and video in five ways. There are nearly 100 different "visuals," colorful patterns which respond to sound. Kolai and Mozai weave patterns and geometric forms; you can even check the profile of a sound wave with the Scope and Attune visuals. Faders offer five ways to dissolve from one graphic to another. Finally, 17 Modifiers change such things as color cycling and palettes. Images can scroll horizontally, vertically, or implode at midscreen. If you can't make up your mind, the Evolve function will pick for you. It shifts through the various environments based on the music's peaks. Once an environment is adjusted to your liking, it can be saved to disk for reuse.





The MindEYE's representation of a cut from the *Tomorrow Never Dies* soundtrack.

Most of these effects can be performed in real time. Put another way, the MindEYE user can "play" his Amiga like a visual instrument to accompany the music. Almost every key has at least one MindEYE function mapped to it (the manual devotes two pages to just listing these key strokes). While "instrument" may sound like hyperbole, it isn't. With the infinite adjustments MindEYE is capable of, you may never see the same graphic twice, even when playing the same music.

If the user is feeling particularly artistic, he can draw on the screen with the mouse as the effects explode across the screen. If you're lucky enough to own a LIVE video capture system, MindEYE works with that, too. There's also a "presentation" mode, which loads a predetermined sequence of graphics.

IFF pictures, brushes, and even sprites can be created, captured, saved and loaded. MindEYE permits "tagging" of graphic files. The user calls the files by pushing a function

key and the number representing the file. This stops an ASL file window from popping up in the middle of a presentation.

MindEYE comes with a 61 page manual. While it won't win any publishing awards for layout and contains some typos, it does a credible job explaining the program. Five tutorials are included to help a user explore the program's versatility. The program also features an online help system.

MindEYE is certainly a niche product. The main market would be dance clubs and DJs. However, it would be an eye catching retail display (a MindEYE-driven video wall would be a mind blower). Since the program's output can be used by a Video Toaster, employing MindEYE for music videos is a natural. I'm planning to insert a MindEYE sequence on a video I use for training as a way of drawing the audience back to their seats after a break.

It would be exciting if Geodesic Designs used the MindEYE compo-

nents for additional products. For example, it would be interesting to see if the sound sampler box could operate some type of voice recognition system. A slightly stripped down and inexpensive Eye program, one which responded to the Amiga's internal sound channels only perhaps, could be a fun home computing product.

The computer industry is rife with products which promote themselves as innovative, when in reality they are just variations on previous themes. MindEYE is truly innovative, creative, fabulous and unique; Amiga owners should be proud to have it on our platform.

Or to sum up in a different way: MindEYE is simply cool.

**MindEYE \$275.00**  
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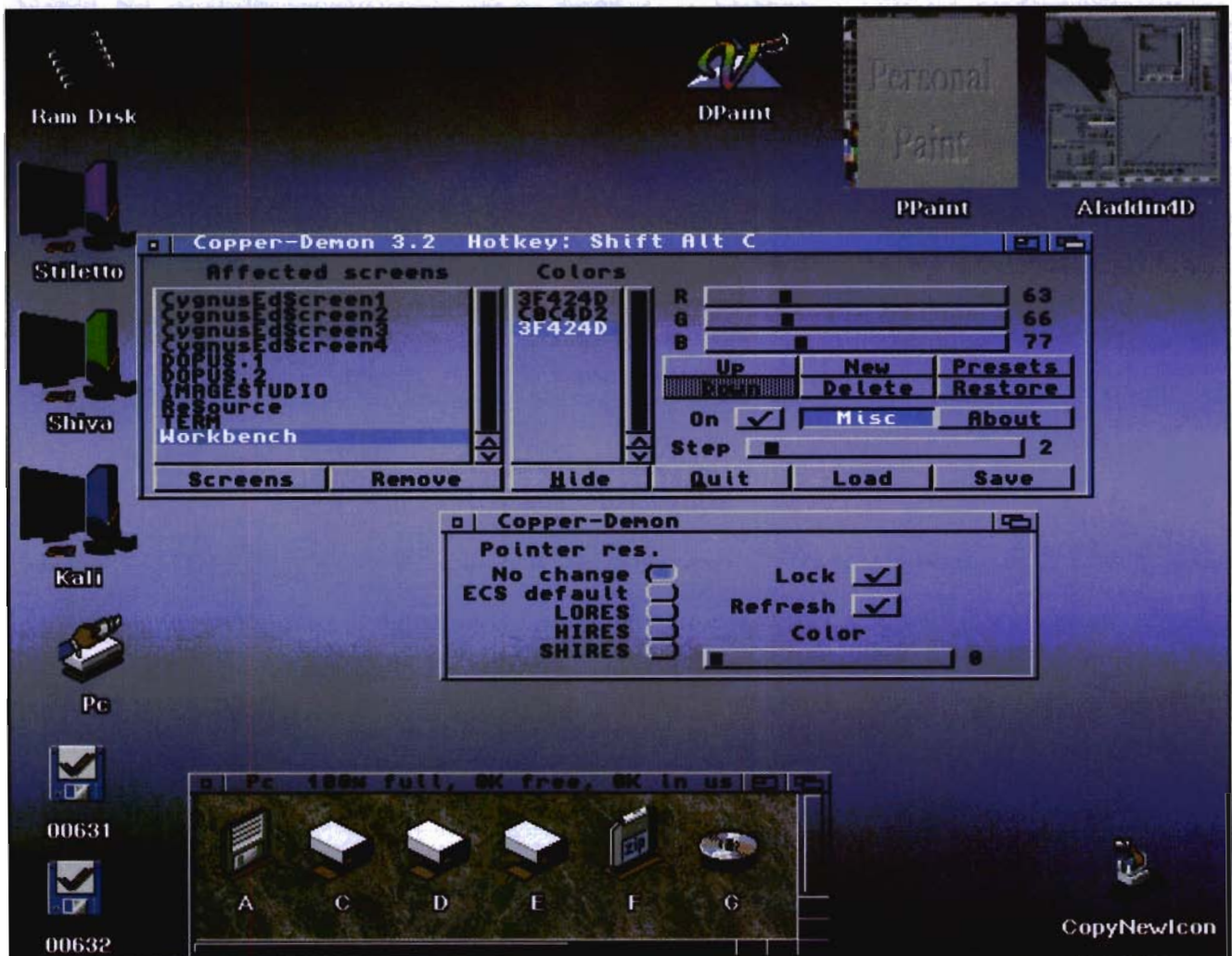


Figure 1: My Copper Demon Settings

## This Old Workbench: Episode 16

### Special Workbench FX

A "Behind the Scenes" look at some of the special effects used to bring you each episode of This Old Workbench

by Dave Matthews

I have received several letters concerning a few of the illustrations accompanying various "This Old Workbench" articles. In particular, the blue-gray gradation used for the background color and the custom window gadgets have drawn questions. So I thought we could treat this episode as a little how to for these effects.

#### Why Don't You All Just F-F-F-Fade Away

In order to duplicate the blue-gray gradation effect, you will need an Amiga with AGA, and a program called CopperDemon, available on Aminet, as util/wb/Copper-Demon.lha. This program, by Valenta Ferenc, allows a 16 million color gradation to show on any public screen, (the Copper is one of the Amiga custom chips).

The trick is to select color 0 as the transparent. See Figure 1 for a screen shot showing Copper Demon with my settings.

#### Urou can hack too!

I use Urouhack, by Tinic Urou, to customize my window gadgets. Urouhack is available on Aminet as util/wb/Urouhack17.lha. The nice thing about Urouhack is it uses IFF brushes for the window gadget



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imagery. This allows the intrepid Amiga user to create his or her own gadgets.

I used Personal Paint to create my gadgets, though Deluxe Paint or any other Amiga paint program would work as well. It's probably easiest to load the included gadgets, and change them as you desire. This way you will have templates to get the sizes right.

Each gadget is actually composed of three images; a non-selected window, selected window, and the alternate image displayed when the gadget is clicked on. See Figure 2 for a screenshot showing my Close Gadgets in Personal Paint.

One little trick I used for the scroller arrow and size gadgets was to make them look fused together, rather

than as separate gadgets. To do this, simply eliminate the border on the corresponding edge of the gadget. Figure 3 shows an example window with the seamless gadget imagery used.

Well, that's it for this episode. As always, you can contact me via Amazing or email: [dm05438@navix.net](mailto:dm05438@navix.net)

•AC•



Figure 2 : Customize your Windows Gadget

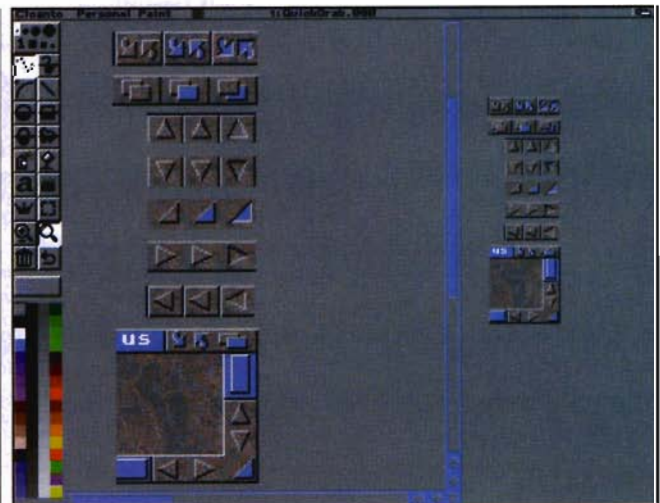
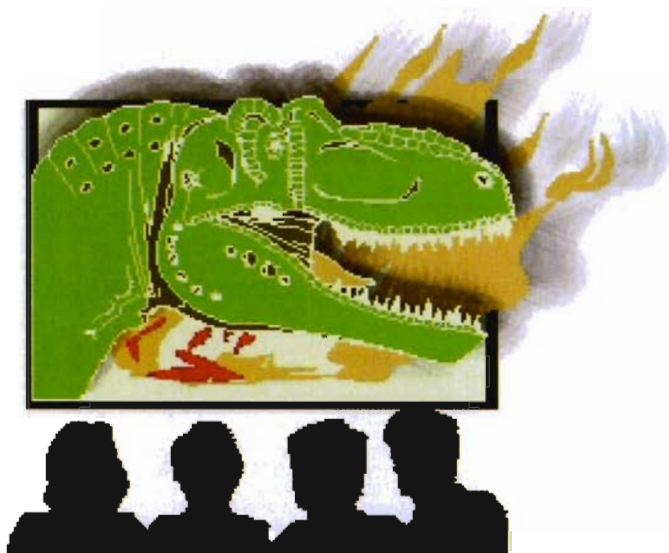


Figure 3 : Seamless Window Gadgets





## Adding Depth to Your Favorite Clip Art

Don't let your clip art just lie there. Give It that extra dimension to make it truly stand out.

by Nick Cook

Back in the early 1950s, the motion picture industry tried fighting television with 3D movies. The audience donned green and red glasses and thrilled to the lions of *Bwana Devil* and the inimitable Vincent Price in *House of Wax*.

Just like movie producers, DTPers seek ways of adding dimensions to their illustrations. The Image Club catalog recently printed a tip on how to add depth to clip art. We'll use their technique along with DrawStudio's ARexx capabilities and Layer function to unflatten our graphic (Figure 1).

**STEP ONE:** We need to modify slightly DrawStudio's "ShadowSoft" ARexx script. DrawStudio allows the user to select a text editor and edit ARexx scripts from within the program. If you want to do this, choose the text editor in the Settings/Miscellaneous Preferences panel (it defaults to MEMACS).

Once set up the way you want it, click Use. Select REXX in the Effects

Go to line 27 of the script. This sets the distance the shadow is dropped behind the object:

```
offset = '0.25in'
```

For our purposes, this is too far. Change the line to:

```
offset = '0.15in'
```

Make sure you keep those single quotation marks. Now drop down to line 29, which controls the opacity of the shadow's color:

```
opacity = 6
```

Change it to read:

```
opacity = 3
```

Save the script as "LayerShadows.dsrx." Unfortunately, DrawStudio's ARexx list doesn't update automatically. Type in the script's name. The name will

appear in the list, then you can execute it.

**STEP TWO:** Assemble your clip art pieces (Figure 2). You can cut and paste between layers or load the clip art when you need it.



**Figure 1:** Although Mr. Dino and the flames "burst out" of the movie screen, the graphic still appears flat overall.

menu. When the requester appears, highlight the "ShadowSoft" script, then click on Edit. Your text editor will start and load the "ShadowSoft" script, although, depending on your editor, you may have to switch screens to find it.



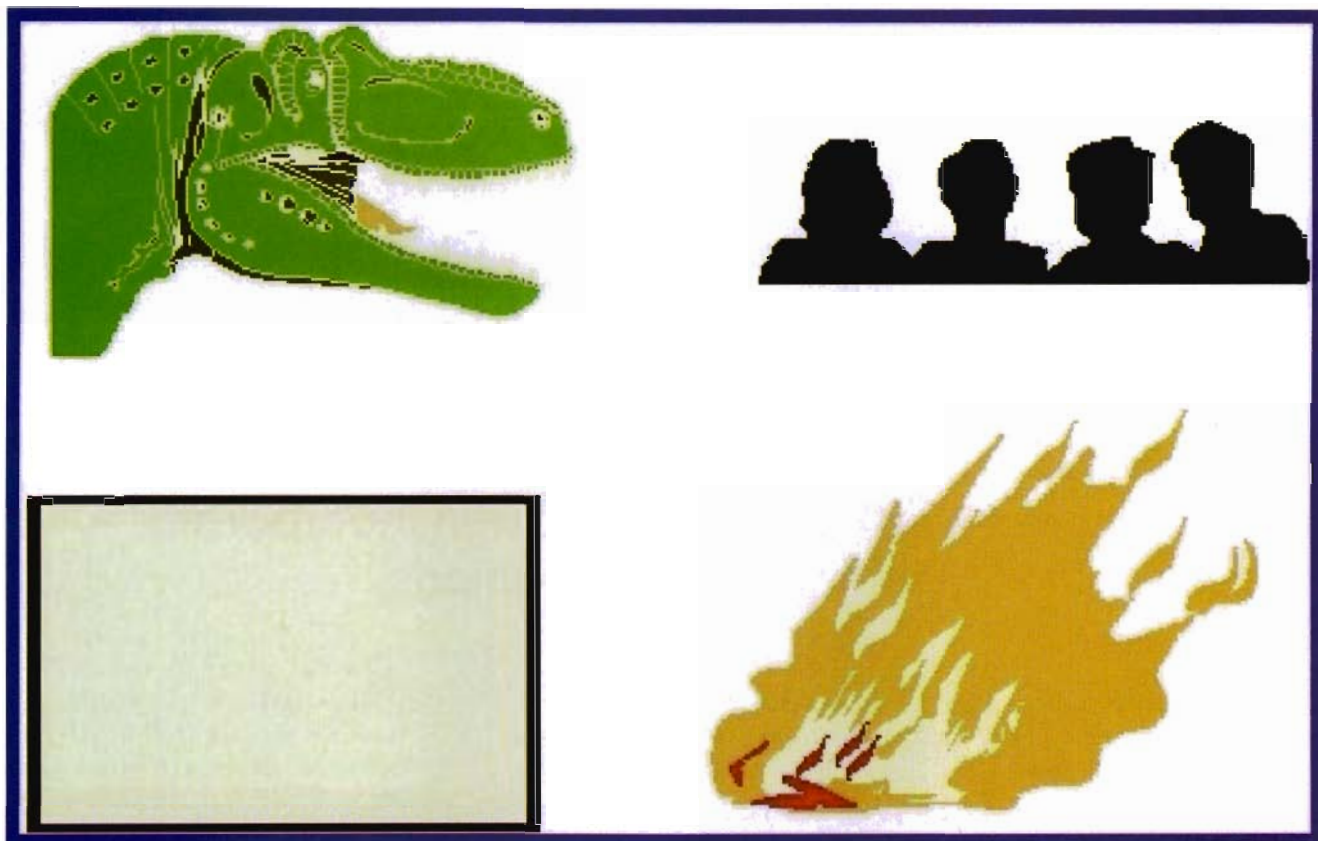


Figure 2: The graphic is "exploded" into its component parts.

### STEP THREE:

Click on "Layers" at the bottom of the window.

When the small list appears, click on Layers again. Finally, we are at the Layers requester (Figure 3). Click on New. Change the new layer's name to "Flames," then click on OK.

### STEP FOUR:

Paste or load the art for the second layer; the flames in this case. Position the artwork and

select REXX from the Effects menu. Highlight our LayerShadows script, then click Execute. Viola! The shadow is in place.

For our graphic, we need to shift the shadow up somewhat. Select the



Figure 3: With so many objects stacked on the same screen real estate, using layers makes manipulation easier.

shadow object and move it so that the bottom of the shadow aligns with the bottom of the flame.

### STEP FIVE:

Repeat Steps Three and Four to build up the drawing. Our illustration placed the monster on the third layer and the somewhat blasé spectators as the fourth layer.

For an extra twist, we can distort a shadow.

Select the "Flames" layer, and click on the shadow. Go to the Warp panel (in the Effects menu), and then Skew Horizontal about 10 to 20 degrees. The flames will appear to leap out even more.

This simple technique adds tremendous interest and depth to clip art. And it is certainly easier than handing out red and green glasses to all your readers!

•AC•

Nick's children's book, *Roller Coasters, or I Had So Much Fun I Nearly Puked* is published by Carolrhoda Books (written completely on his Amiga, of course!).

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## JavaScript is now part of the Amiga language as both AWeb-II and Web Design incorporate it into their latest editions.

It's not a case of *deja vu*, or an April Fool joke, but this month we begin by talking about AWeb-II, again.

### Can You Say "JavaScript"?

No sooner had I finished the second of two columns about the AWeb-II browser package from Amitrix, than they posted a patch to bring the package up to version 3.1. This fixes some bugs, enhances some features, and adds several brand new capabilities. The most exciting of these is support for JavaScript 1.1. No, this is not the long-rumored, much-delayed

Amiga Java Virtual Machine.

JavaScript is a completely separate product developed by Netscape.

Java is a programming language which requires a compiler that translates statements such as:

```
public void run() {
    URLConnection conn = null;
    DataInputStream data = null;
```

into what is called bytecodes, read by the Java Virtual Machine, and then executed. Java is intended to be used for programs, called applets, which are downloaded to your computer before running.

JavaScript is a scripting language that is used within the HTML code for a Web page. It is sent to your computer along with the HTML, detected by the Browser, and sent to the JavaScript interpreter. It is used to provide control to objects on the Web page, such as forms, buttons, windows, etc.

Figure 1 shows a sample JavaScript page showing how a function called `onMouseOver` works. This function is used to change the appearance of buttons on many pages as your mouse pointer passes over them. Listing 1 shows the source for this page.

Notice how the JavaScript statements are part of the HTML for the page itself. A Browser without JavaScript capability still displays the page correctly, just without the extra functionality. These examples are from:

<http://www.starlingtech.com/books/javascript/examples.html>

If you are interested in writing your own JavaScript programs, there is a stand-alone interpreter and a debugger now part of the AWeb-II package. The interpreter, AWebJS, is run from the Shell or CLI. If your JavaScript program doesn't make use of any Browser objects or functions, this lets you avoid loading AWeb-II into memory.

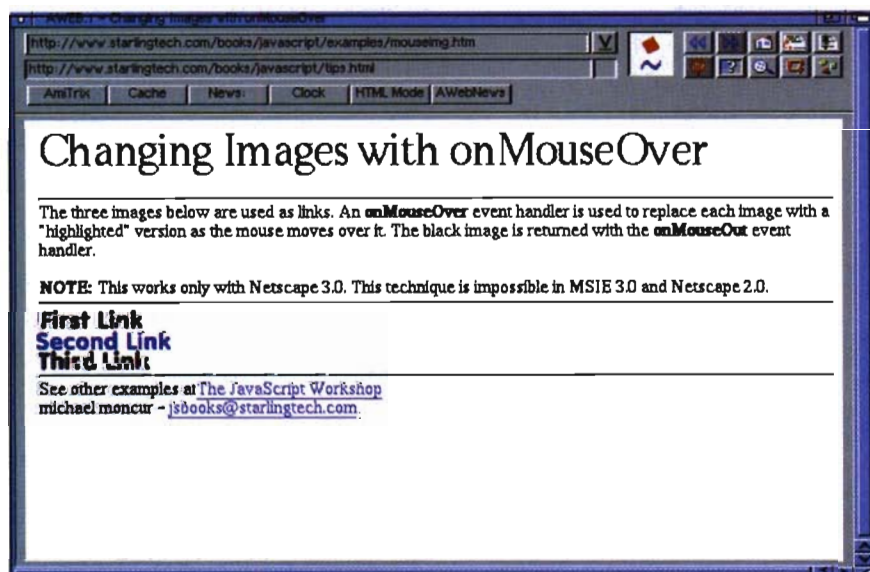


Figure 1: As the mouse pointer (invisible here) passes over a link, the link changes appearance. After the pointer leaves the link, it reverts to its original appearance.



The debugger can be added to the Shell or CLI command that starts AWebJS, or can be activated from within the Browser itself. The debugger opens a window (Figure 2) displaying the current code fragment to execute. Controls allow you to step through entire lines or portions of code. You can also enter values or expressions directly, without rewriting the code.

### MiamiSSL

Another addition to version 3.1 of AWeb-II is support for the Secure Socket Layer feature that is part of the registered version of Miami. This allows encrypted transmission of data to and from a server. A small box to the right of the Status Bar at the top of the main AWeb window (Figure 3) changes to indicate a secure connection.

### AutoSearch

An addition to the Netsearch feature (see the *Amazing Computing/Amiga February 98 On Line*) is the new AutoSearch function. Clear the URL box at the top of the page of the current Web page URL, type in the keyword or phrase you want to search for and hit the Return key. The word or phrase you typed is sent to your favorite search engine (the default is AltaVista), and the search is executed.

These are the major additions to AWeb-II 3.1. There are others, like support for HTML4.0 standards, addition of keyboard configuration, new ARexx commands, and a handy search function added to the documentation.

The update requires you to have either version 3.0 or 3.0b of AWeb-II installed on your computer, and the original installation disk 1. With this update, AWeb-II has once again raised the bar for other Amiga Web Browsers.

### Web Design

Speaking of writing code, with AWeb-II's support of JavaScript it is a sure bet that Amiga HTML authoring programs will start offering this capability, too. Larry McGahey gets the prize for being first here. His

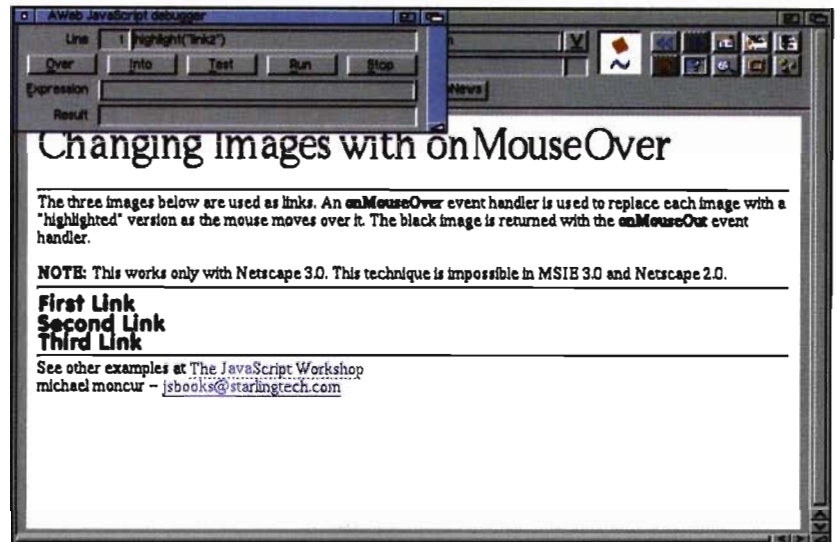


Figure 2: The JavaScript debugger window in action.

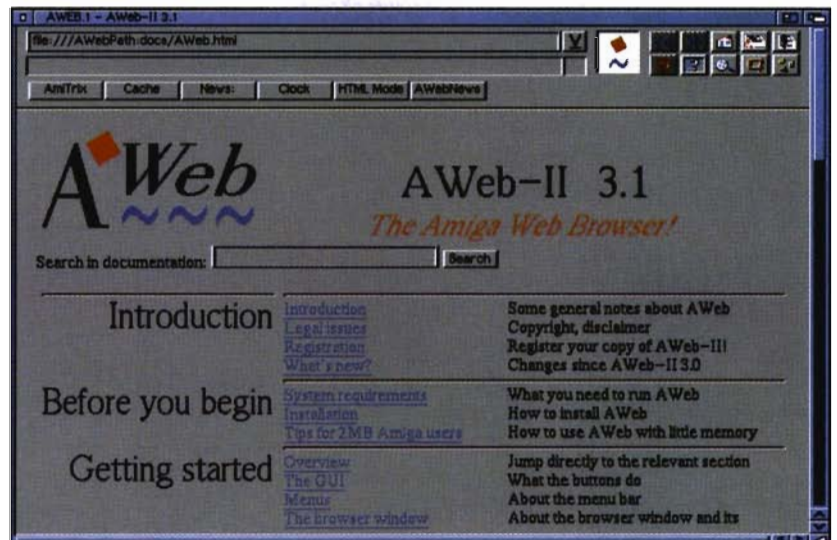


Figure 3: That little square next to the status window can bring big peace of mind. Also note the new Documentation search function.



Figure 4: Web Design is the first Amiga HTML authoring program to support JavaScript.



program Web Design (Figure 4) includes JavaScript support as of version 1.9i. Look closely at the status bar in the screen grab. The message captured here is scrolled across the window with JavaScript. This is another common use for JavaScript in web sites. Time and space are too short to take a fresh look at this program this month, but stay tuned.

### Reader Tip

I received an e-mail from Peter Heizer describing a program he had found on AmiNet that could reduce the wear and tear on the mouse buttons of your Amiga. AutoConnect is a series of ARexx scripts that allow users of Miami to launch an application, such as a Browser or an e-mail program, and if Miami is not running, the script will start it and your Internet connection first.

The script package is from Richard Griffith and it is freeware. AmigaGuide documentation and sample scripts are included in the archive. You will have to make some minor modifications to the scripts to fit your particular system. The author also has a tn3270 client server program (if you don't know what this is, you probably don't need one).

### Where to Find It

#### AWeb-II

The update file is AWeb31pch.lha, and is a 680,805 byte download from the Aminet comm/tcp directory, or Amitrix at:

<http://www.amitrix.com>

#### MiamiSSL

The Miami program files can also be found in the comm/tcp AmiNet subdirectory, or the Miami homepage at:

<http://www.nordicglobal.com/Miami.html>

Information about the Secure Socket Layer protocol can be found at:

### LISTING ONE:

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//IETF//DTD HTML//EN//3.2">

<HEAD>
<TITLE>Changing Images with onMouseOver</TITLE>

<SCRIPT LANGUAGE="JavaScript">
// image changes on onMouseOver
// (c) 1996 Michael Moncur - http://starlingtech.com/books/javascript/
// freeware - copy if you want to

// global variables (one per image to store highlighted version)
// (these are not used again, since the image is cached.)
var img1 = new Image();
var img2 = new Image();
var img3 = new Image();

// pre-load highlight images
function init() {
    img1.src = "link1b.gif";
    img2.src = "link2b.gif";
    img3.src = "link3b.gif";
}

// highlight a link
function highlight(img) {
    document[img].src = img + "b.gif";
}

// un-highlight a link
function unhighlight(img) {
    document[img].src = img + "a.gif";
}

</SCRIPT>
</HEAD>

Changing Images with onMouseOver

<hr>
The three images below are used as links. An onMouseOver event handler
is used to
replace each image with a "highlighted" version as the mouse moves over it.
The black image is returned
with the onMouseOut event handler.

NOTE: This works only with Netscape 3.0. This technique is impossible
in MSTE 3.0 and Netscape 2.0.
<hr>

<IMG NAME="link1" SRC="link1a.gif" WIDTH=86 HEIGHT=18 BORDER=0>

<IMG NAME="link2" SRC="link2a.gif" WIDTH=110 HEIGHT=16 BORDER=0>

<IMG NAME="link3" SRC="link3a.gif" WIDTH=91 HEIGHT=16 BORDER=0>

<hr>
See other examples at The JavaScript Workshop

michael moncur - jsbooks@starlingtech.com
```

Listing 1: Notice how the JavaScript is integrated into the HTML code for the example page.

<http://home.netscape.com/assist/security/ssl/howitworks.html>

### Web Design

The most recent version of this HTML authoring program can always be found at:

<http://www.net-link.net/~lmcgahay/>

### AutoConnect

The file autoconn.lha is 8,145 bytes, and can be found on AmiNet in the comm/tcp subdirectory. The authors homepage has this file, as well as the tn3270 client and other programs at:

<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/ragriffi>



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Effective the first of April, I will be closing three of my on line accounts. This is being done for a number of reasons, none of them applying equally to the three accounts. The overriding consideration however is lack of time on my part to visit them often enough to justify the continued monthly charges.

This decision doesn't come easily; for instance I have had an account on Genie longer than I have had an Amiga, and I have put it off for as long as I could. Therefore, after April 1st, please direct all of your e-mail to me at:

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Please include a SASE if you need a personal reply.

If you run an Amiga specific BBS, send me the information callers will need to access your system. Phone number(s), modem speeds, software settings, etc. As a service to the Amiga community I will include the information I receive in this column from time to time.

If you come across any World Wide Web sites you feel would be of interest to the Amiga community, pass them along for inclusion in the HotList of the Month. Send the info to any of my addresses above.

That's all for now. See you on line!

•AC•

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# Cinemorph Glows

When morphing images, you should think "keyframes" and the "in-betweens" that produce your final result.

by R. Shamms Mortier

When people think of morphing, and the software that can accommodate it, they usually have visions of one object or scene melting into another. True, this represents the majority of projects that are taken on and rendered with morphing software, but that's not the end of the story. When you think of morphing software, think "keyframes". Both the source and target frames in a morph sequence are nothing more than keyframes. The computer, under control of the morphing software, renders the "in-betweens" that get you from point A to point B, from the source keyframe to the target keyframe.

ImageFX from Nova Design has a great morphing module: Cinemorph. Cinemorph is a lightning fast morphing application, and is extremely intuitive to operate. When used on an Amiga 4000 with AGA capabilities, the source, target, and morphed in-betweens can be previewed in 256 colors. The frames can be saved out in several formats, including full 24-bit.

## The Basics of a Cinemorph Session

When you double click on the Cinemorph icon (which is in the ImageFX drawer), the Cinemorph module comes up set for new project input. The full ImageFX control panel also comes up on the Workbench screen, just in case you want to add some image processing to the resulting frames in the morphed sequence. The first thing to do is to set your default parameters: Screen Mode, Load/Save Settings, and Render Settings. Next, click on the Source Screen to make it live, and go to the Cell menu to Load Image. This loads an image into the

Source Keyframe. Do the same thing to the Target image area, loading in the last keyframe.

The next thing to do is to set the total number of frames in the Cell menu under Set Frames. 30 is a good number to begin exploring. Also under the Cell menu is an option named "Edit Tweening", which allows you to set the progress of the morph sequence from Linear, Sinusoidal, and Hyperbolic choices. These options affect the way that the source image transits to the target over time. You can see how the morph will move just by studying the three curves. The curves can be reshaped according to your needs, so a morph might proceed halfway and stop, then suddenly speed to the end.

With the settings in place the way you want them, it's time to bring in your images. First, however, let's talk a bit about what we expect to achieve from this operation, and why. In a 3D program, it becomes a fairly convoluted process to do the same thing as we are about to do with the help of ImageFX Cinemorph. We are going to produce a frame sequence that shows an image glowing internally, so that the light throbs back and forth. If you use your 3D application to try to achieve the same thing, each frame in the sequence will have to be ray traced independently, which can take a lot of time. We are using ImageFX to achieve the same result because Cinemorph only has to calculate the differences between small areas of the in-betweens, so consequently Cinemorph does the job faster.

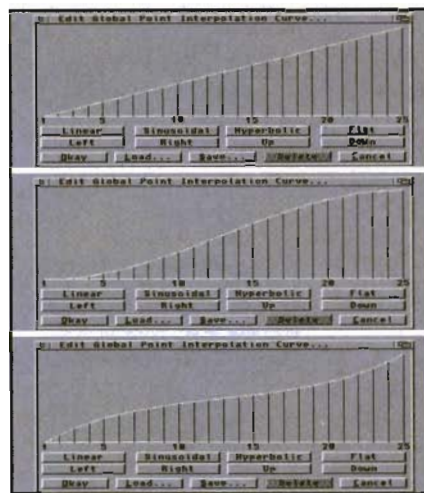


Figure 1. You can force the morphing sequence to follow one of three timing curves in Cinemorph: Linear, Sinusoidal, or Hyperbolic.



Figure 2. Once the morph's keyframes have been entered in, Cinemorph allows you to preview any selected frame in the sequence.

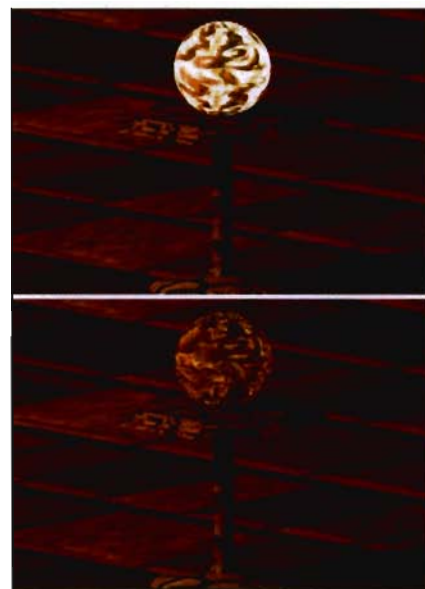


Figure 3. Our first experiment allows the ball on the table to glow internally in this 3D scene generated in Aladdin 4D. These are the two keyframes.

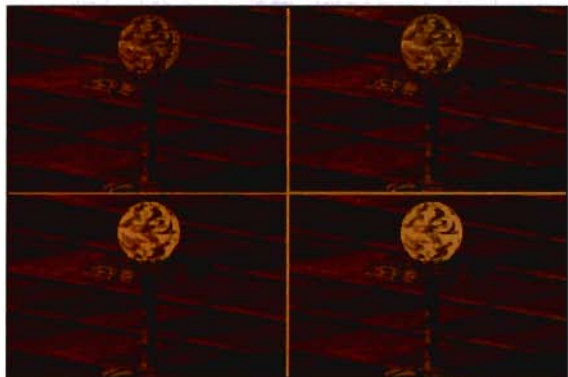


Figure 4. The finished animation shows the ball in the 3D scene glowing with mysterious power. Looped back and forth, the animation is quite effective.

All that you will need your 3D software for is to generate the Source and Target keyframes. I used Aladdin 4D to get the Source/Target frames for these examples. You can try the same thing with LightWave or any other suitable Amiga 3D software.

### The 3D Steps

We are after a glowing object that casts no light on other objects, but simply throbs with its own internal capacity. This might be a magic jewel that sits in a box, or the lights on a UFO. The Source object should be dark, and the target object light. Both Aladdin and LightWave have object controls for making an object darker or brighter, by simply turning up its ability to reflect and/or emit light (Glow Mapping). That's really all you have to be concerned with in the 3D part of the process. It doesn't matter what the object is, though a ball is as good a place to start to explore as any other more complex object.

You must also make sure that both of the keyframes you produce are exactly the same size and resolution, and that the camera remains fixed in each frame. The only difference between the frames will be the darkness/lightness of the object set to glow.

### Back to Cinemorph

Once the frames have been loaded to Cinemorph, go to the Preview option to check on the finished renders of a few frames in the middle of the sequence. If they look OK, Generate the frames as either an animation or a single frame sequence to disk. When you see the results, you'll be amazed at how realistic the glowing objects look,

opening up a whole new area for exploratory animation effects. Since Cinemorph can also act on animations and animated frame sequences, this new effect isn't limited to only one frame input. If you have generated single frame sequences, then you can go back to your 3D software and load the sequence back as a projected animation within the 3D context. The permutations are limitless!

•AC•



Figure 5. This experiment involves a double reverse glow. The "jewel" in the centers of the arrangement starts off with a bright light that fades in the target keyframe. The rest of the object starts off dark, and moves to a bright appearance. Looping this animation produces a double glow effect.

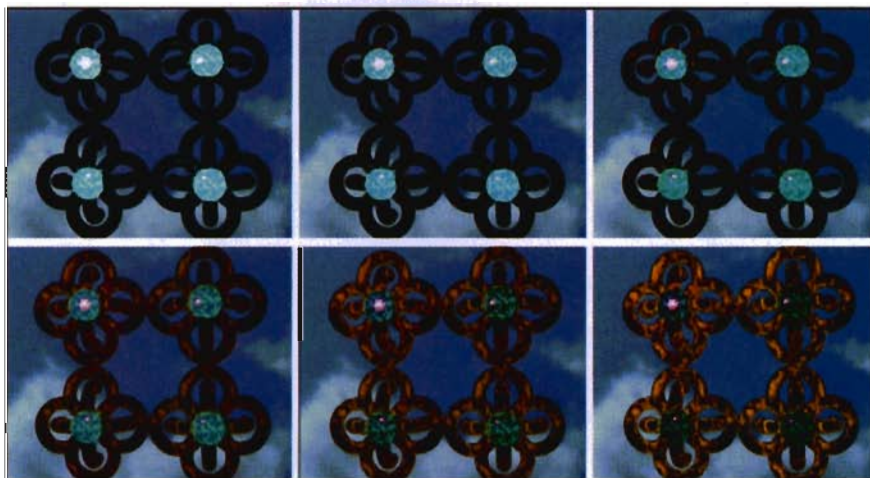


Figure 6. These frames show the progression of the animation keyframes from figure 5 sequenced in Cinemorph.

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# GAMES ON THE AMIGA

By Peter Olafson

## Vulcan redefines their Amiga game strategy.

The Amiga side of Vulcan's forge has cooled considerably. The UK publisher — one of the machine's staunchest backers since its inception in 1994 — reported in late January that it will begin developing games for IBM compatibles, the Macintosh and the Sony PlayStation, and trimmed by almost half its roster of planned Amiga releases.

"The only way Vulcan can remain active in the Amiga market is if we can stay financially sound, strong in resources and talents and function as a successful business," wrote Vulcan director Paul Carrington in a lengthy statement of explanation. "Certainly we are aware that these [PC and PSX] markets are saturated, but these

markets do have active distribution network[s], with millions of potential customers."

At the same time, the publisher has dropped several Amiga CD-ROM games to allow developers to focus on other projects: the Utopia-like *Breed 2000*, 3D Games Creator (a design tool to build and play Quake-style games), a scenery add-on for its *JetPilot* flight sim and *Valhalla IV*. In addition, the *Hellpigs* team has stopped work on that multi-CD adventure, and the developers of the graphic adventure *Wasted Dreams* are now playing wait-and-see.

Specifics of Vulcan's PC and console plans haven't been announced. Carrington attributed the decision to a

greatly-reduced market for Amiga software and, in an apparent swipe at Amiga International, the absence of the direction and funding needed to restore the Amiga to a competitive position.



A shot from Vulcan's upcoming first-person shoot-em-up. *Genetic Species*.



Vulcan's *Desolate* — rather like *Deliverance*.

Oddly enough, it was a fragile market that helped Vulcan establish itself back in January 1994. With Amiga publishers falling by the wayside, Carrington and partner Lisa Tunnah released a top-down graphic adventure called *Valhalla & the Lord of Infinity*. It was a delightful game, and it was a springboard to bigger things. By 1996, Vulcan was publishing the work of outside developers. In 1997, it moved into CD-ROM. (We'll



Hard Target: The Amiga's *Virtua Cop*.

look at Vulcan's recent output in an upcoming column.) With a dozen or more releases, it's the leading Amiga-specific publisher.

But the market has continued to erode in the face of competition from inexpensive, high-spec computers and consoles. "January 1997 was the hardest month of Vulcan's entire existence," Carrington wrote. "I still joke about the fact that Santa Claus delivered a Playstation or multimedia PC to every household for Christmas of '96."







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"They say that hundreds of thousands of Amiga users still use their Amigas," he wrote. "I honestly don't know the number, but I do know that Amiga software piracy is rife and, with the total Amiga-buying user base at its lowest current level, that there is simply no longer enough users left who BUY software to justify the developers' and publishers' investment."

Carrington also indicated that Vulcan was operating under the assumption that new Amiga owner Gateway 2000 and its Amiga International division would take speedy remedial action. "From March to December 1997 ... Vulcan prepared for the Amiga's future," Carrington wrote. "I know things don't happen overnight but, with the Amiga market being at its most critical and at its lowest point ever, I knew that if Vulcan's dreams and hopes for the Amiga as a commercially successful platform did not materialize in that specific period of time, then the Amiga market would never recover."

Specifically, "the only way the Amiga has a chance of revival, in Vulcan's opinion, is money!" Carrington wrote. "Money poured into the cream plastic until it spews out the sides, money at the level of Sony's investment into its Playstation."

"We are talking a complete base tower computer system, with high resolution Monitor, keyboard, floppy drive, a 24x CD-Rom, 1 gig to 10 gig hard drive, a modem, a graphics card with 4MB on board, 3D chipset, 32MB memory, combined 060 CPU with 200Mhz PPC board, MPEG decoders, sound card, external speakers, a backward-compatible ... AGA chipset, new operating system, pre-installed web browsers, Email applications, word processors, spreadsheet and accountancy software, and bundled games software which has all been invested into and acquired for the purpose and finally the word 'AMIGA' on the outside ...

"Anything less ... and the Amiga has not got a hope in hell of catching up in the ever-moving commercial

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Only with your help, can we be certain your products, services, and organizations are included in this valuable resource.

computer market," Carrington wrote. "Currently the Amiga community has all the people and companies available to make the above system a reality. The thing lacking is the direction and the money." At press time, Gateway 2000 had not responded to a request for comment.

But fear not: Vulcan is not dropping Amiga development. Genetic Species, an elaborate Wolfenstein 3-D-style shoot-em-up, should be available by the time you read this and the platformer Desolate, the Virtua Cop clone Hard Target and the World Creator CD for Genetic Species all are said to be "close behind" Almagica: Scions of a Forgotten World is farther off, but still planned. (Developer DSP is looking for programmers to work on the Warcraft II clone.)

In addition, Carrington wrote, "we are actively supplying a selection of our developers with PPC boards and, along with Explorer 2260 and Maim & Mangle [a space opera and Command & Conquer variant planned for PowerPC-based Amigas] we will see other exciting high specification Amiga titles being developed and published by Vulcan through 1998."

Moreover, "We will still operate our Amiga Publishing operations and actively sign new Amiga development teams and individuals. As long as there are developers developing for

the Amiga, we will always be available as a mainstream commercial publisher."

Amiga owners responding to the news on UseNet (where the statement was posted) have offered widely varying reactions, and mine are divided as well. I'm disheartened because Vulcan, despite the mixed quality of its output, has emerged as a hero within the Amiga community for its very steadfastness. I'm concerned about the potential dampening effect it may have on smaller publishers that face similar decisions. And I'm troubled because it represents a conspicuous dent in the determination of the faithful — that knot of hard-core Amiga publishers that have set their clocks by the Amiga, following their hearts before their wallets, since April 1994.

But having one's heart in the right place doesn't sell games and I can't fault the publisher for having a survival instinct. As I interpret it, this is essentially a business decision that allows Vulcan to continue doing what it loves by doing what the market requires in order to foot the bill.

Besides, a Vulcan that publishes for the Amiga is certainly better than one that doesn't — or that doesn't exist at all. The forge is still warm. We'll just have to learn to share it.

•AC•

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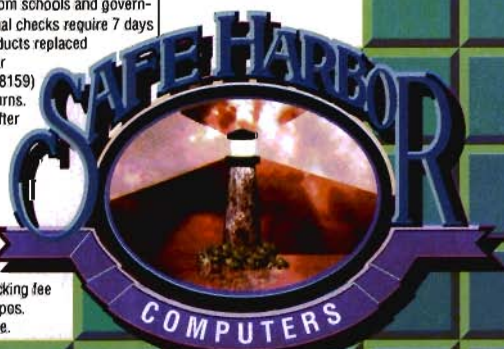
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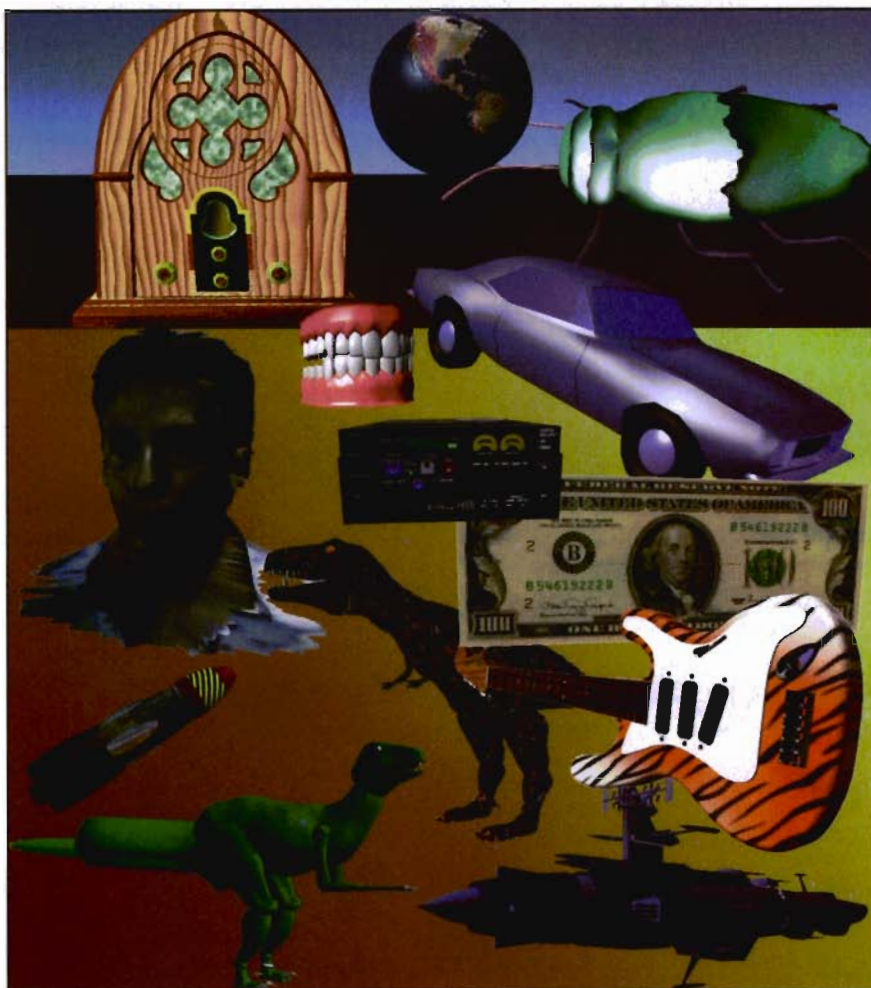
*Reviewed by R. Shamms Mortier*

The Light-ROM Gold CD-ROM is packed with useful items for LightWave users, and also contains a few extras other Amiga users will enjoy. There is even a separate file directory just for 3.5 LightWavers.

Listed in the 3.5 directory are two separate folders: Objects and Scenes. In the Objects folder there are thirty-one folders with separated object categories. These are not objects included in the NewTek collection which comes with the 3.5 upgrade. Instead, many are extremely useful objects. Sample object categories include Animals, Computers, Household, Lamps, Toys, and Weapons. Each of these categories contains from one to several object files. Weapons, for instance, contains a Crossbow, Missile, and Spikeball, just right for outfitting the atomic warrior stuck in the middle ages. The Animals folder contains a very nice Beetle, Brachiosaur, Velociraptor, and a Trexx. Of course, the standard NewTek Cow is also in residence.

The 3.5 Scenes folder contains 31 scenes that the objects fit into. This allows you to load objects with all parts and environments in place. Often, it's more convenient to load a scene and then delete unwanted elements. There is also a copy of Switch, an ARexx script that allows you to switch between version 3.1 and 3.5 of LightWave. And speaking of ARexx scripts, there is a whole folder of them, including a load of samples for LightWave's Modeler. Included are also some shareware scripts.

A Demos folder contains some Amiga operative demos, and also some that are PC specific. Since many Amiga LightWave folks also talk PC,



Here is a sample of the objects that are included on the Light-ROM Gold CD-ROM from Graphic Detail.

there is something here for everyone. A demo version of MacroForm is included, with several fully loadable examples of modules in action. There is a workable version of Pixel 3D, and another of PolyForm (PC). Also for the PC is a version of the NuGraf Rendering System, and a collection of plugins.

There is another plugins folder, but this stuff is only PC specific. It includes Vertilectric, Point Spread, and Metaballs. A separate folder for Windows NT contains another 10 alternate plugins, and also some C source code for developers. A couple of tutorials, dealing with Metaforms, round out the mix.

## The Best News

Since this CD-ROM contains all this PC stuff, perhaps you are wondering why you, a confirmed Amiga obsessive, should bother with it. Well, there is a good answer: A4D5, Aladdin

4D version 5 from Nova Designs. remember that Aladdin, a superlative Amiga 3D rendering and animation package, can load LightWave objects. This means that all of the LightWave objects on this CD collection are open for export to Aladdin 4D. There has never been a more complete texturing application than Aladdin 4D, so all of these objects can be addressed with new Aladdin textures, both procedurals and bitmaps. That's the main reason you should think of adding this CD-ROM to your library.

Of course, you'll have to get Aladdin 4D as well (Hey! I thought everybody had it!) Contact Graphic Detail for pricing.

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**Volume 13 Number 1 January 1998**

**New Products & other Neat Stuff**, Catalyzer from Legacy, S-VHS for your Amiga, CygnusEd Professional 4, Flyer SCSI Cases, and more!

**Wild Fire**, Amiga graphics heat up. In an age of lowered expectations for Amiga enthusiasts, it is particularly nice to see the enthusiasm that the crew behind Wildfire display preview by Dave Matthews.

**DiskSalv 3**, Second only to that horrible moment when you slam your locked car door and see the keys dangling from the ignition is realizing that you've just deleted a file that you need by Nick Cook.

**The SONY Digital Mavica MVC-FD7**, Being forced to live without a digital camera is no fun, probably akin to trying to kick any drug habit. Shakes, shivers, and quivers disturb a night's sleep, and you find yourself sobbing uncontrollably while reviewing your stored image data by R. Shamms Mortier.

**YA3DTE - Yet another 3D Type Effect**, Adding an additional dimension to your text and

graphics is easier than you think! by Nick Cook.

**On Line**, Tricks to installing those pesky "floppy only" programs on your hard drive. Choose the right Amiga pet for your system by Rob Hays

**This Old Workbench: Episode 13 Scalos and Newicons V4.1**, Scalos offers a more traditional workbench while providing a set of new features and Newicons is...well, newicons! by Dave Matthews.

**Color f/x**, A few suggestions on using ImageFX to apply a color effect to a forgotten image or animation to resuscitate it and give it new life by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Midwest Ami Expo**, A gathering of Amiga souls was held in Columbus Nov 1-2. Read the latest on all the exhibitors and their products by Bob Scharp.

**Cologne '97 A Developer's View**, Kermit from Nova Design offers his insights into the Amiga's largest coming out party by Kermit Woodall

**Petro's Show Remarks**, The text of Petro Tyschtschenko's opening address at the Cologne Computer '97.

**An interview with Jeff Schindler, General Manager of Amiga Inc.**, "The product we wish to bring out first is the improved operating system O.S. 3.5. This would include the best of say internet, drivers and printer support to name a few." by Bob Scharp.



**Volume 12 Number 12, December 1997**

**New Products & other neat stuff**, Win a phase5 accelerator on the web, Amiga Forever emulator, Nova Sector Engineering to produce Amigas, Lotus Inc., and more!

**IDEFix97 Atapi CDROM Device Update**, IDEFix not only supports Atapi CDROMs, but many other IDE devices, such as hard drives, IDE Zip drives, the LS-120 120MB floppy, IDE CDROM changers, as well as enhancements in general for IDE devices on the Amiga by Dave Matthews.

**Aladdin 4D: Tutorial 15 - Procedural Textures**, Aladdin 4D has a secret weapon to improve the look and size of textured drawings as well as the speed of animations. Try thirty-three Procedural Texture basic designs to improve your art in any magnification, by R. Shamms Mortier

**The Grammar of Ornament**, A CD that offers design, style, history, and values from the nineteenth century to computer graphic artists of today review by R. Shamms Mortier.

**On Line**, Stay current with the latest shareware using AmiNet Browsing and email. Or,

use AminetRtc or AminetFTP and automate the process by Rob Hays.

**This Old Workbench: Episode 12 Something Old, Something New...**, Class Action, MCP 1.3, Visual Prefs, and BarNone are just some of the programs available through AmiNet and on-line to help you gain total control over your Amiga's Workbench by Dave Matthews.

**Games on the Amiga**, The latest news, gossip, and just plain hopes for the Amiga game community by P. Olafson.

**Text a Glow Glow...**, Adding a little extra brightness to a headline by Nick Cook.

**Amiga LINUX**, Another way to tell Bill Gates to, um, Buzz Off! by Nick Cook.



**Volume 12 Number 11; November 1997**

**New Products and other Neat Stuff**, Amiga Developers' conference, AmiCON Amiga Show, Epson, p.OS beta, PM Pro, and more.

**Multimedia Branching Storyboarding Creation**, Amiga multimedia producers need to be able to storyboard their ideas, but multimedia storyboarding incorporates necessities that animation storyboarding lacks, specifically "non-linearity", by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Text Effects in Draw Studio**, Using Draw Studio to customize your text, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Crossing the Line: Poser 2**, Crossing the line: cross-platform project ideas for the Amiga. Creating and animating anatomical models with a Mac or a Windows PC for Amiga uses, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Directory Opus 5.6 Magellan**, GPS Software's Directory Opus can bring your Amiga Workbench into an entirely new reality, by William Near.

**This Old Workbench: Episode 11 A New Face for an Old Friend**, Magellan and Mbench Amiga Workbench alternatives, by Dave Matthews.

**On Line**, Spam-O-Matic — It doesn't slice or dice, but it could chop out unwanted email. Updates on A-WebII and Miami TCP/IP, plus AOL buys CompuServe, by Rob Hays.

**A Photo Finish Creating Image Filled Text**, Picture filled words can be worth a fortune to any layout or special graphic, by Nick Cook.

**Games on the Amiga**, This month, Peter has outdone himself. There are four sections to this issue's coverage of games on the Amiga you do not want to miss: Command & Conquer, Briefs: News on Amiga Gaming, Reviews, and Caught in the Net, by Peter Olafson.

**ANIMfaces**, AnimBrushes, only the AMIGA can boast of AnimBrushes. Use Shamms' technique to dabble in your own quick and easy animations, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Books of Note: Net Research: Information Online**, Avoid detours on the Information Superhighway. Daniel J. (BLAZEMONGER) Barrett has written a collection of strategies for research and discovery for everyone on the net, Reviewed by Nick Cook.

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## Recent History! Did You Miss The March Issue?



Volume 13 Number 3 March 1998

**New Products & other neat Stuff**, Developer book for Blitz Basic, Image FX3.0, Aminet resets, and more.

**PowerPC**, Joe Torre of Amiga Inc. on the Amiga's CPU direction.

**Smoothing Reality**, Smooth out life's bumpy roads (or at least those created by DFX 3D files) with Pixel 3D Professional by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Chat with Amiphone**, communicate with other Amiga friends but don't pay the high telephone bills! by Frederick R. Phillips II.

**POV Ray Tracer 3.02c**, 3D art on a budget! by Dave Matthews

**On Line**, Some of the extra goodies in the AWebII.

**Hey! Who Tore My Amazing Computing/Amiga!**, Draw attention to your presentations with a *tattered* look by Nick Cook.

**This Old Workbench: Episode 15 The Importance of Being small**, Compression

software for the net or just to make room on your hard drive by Dave Matthews.

**Games on the Amiga**, Quake comes to the Amiga, plus an update on the Doom clones by Peter Olafson.

**Games on the Amiga II**, Part 2 of Peter's coverage on Amiga pioneer, Bill Williams by Peter Olafson.

**Letter Morph Geometry**, In animation, there are an infinite number of ways to get the effect you need. In this tutorial, we explore the use of text morphing in a variety of operations by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Byte Sized Reviews**, You can create pretty neat particle effects in your Amiga 2D painting software by Nick Cook.

**And Furthermore...Technology and Community**, With the world of computers and the Amiga available to us, our vision can grow by looking next door by R. Shamms Mortier.

"I don't get a single technical journal that covers as much important information as your February issue did, even in magazines 10 times as thick. There was news in there that had not been made stale by the plethora of news on the Web."

Steve Shireman

## High Praise! Check Out The February Issue.



Volume 13 Number 2 February 1998

**New Products & other Neat Stuff**, ImageFX offer for ADPro users, Free Amiga web server software, Amiga User Group Network, Amiga soars in India, & more.

**The First Clones**, Index Information and DCE Computer Service have both announced newly revised Amiga boards. Just what are the new Amiga licensees promising.

**Aladdin 4D Tutorial #16: Line Types as Textures**, Tapping the unique features of Aladdin 4d's polygons. by R Shamms Mortier

**PageStream 3.3: A Year in the Making**, SoftLogik listened to their customers and supplied the newest version of PageStream with a load of bells and whistles. by R Shamms Mortier

**Cut It Out**, Making a stencil headline effect. by Nick Cook

**On Line**, Aweb delivers a variety of features to your Amiga to ease you through the internet. by Rob Hays

**This Old Workbench: Episode 14 24-bit Datatype Redux**, A discussion of the latest 24-bit datatypes as well as other interesting utilities available through Aminet downloads! by Dave Matthews

**Windows 95 Goodies for Amigoids**, An array for Windows 95 programs that help the Amiga fan when they must work with that alternative computer platform. by Dave Matthews

**Reading PDF and PostScript Files**, Can the Amiga become an acrobat? Displaying informational files from other platforms on the Amiga. by Michael Tobin, M.D., PhD

**Creating a 2D Particle System**, You can create pretty neat particle effects in your Amiga 2D painting software. by R Shamms Mortier

**Games on the Amiga**, A tribute to the work of Bill Williams: Part 1. This man brought the Amiga some of its earliest and most unique games. Who is he and what is he doing today? by Peter Olafson

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(continued from page 48)

Circle 149 on Reader Service card.

fessional workstation. Amiga users have known for years that the Amiga is serious multitasking, not a toy or clone. Professional videographers know about the Amiga, but have been hesitant to invest in a platform with the "game" reputation. This is no game machine (unless you are really, really serious about Amiga games).

**AC:** You want to raise the professional reputation of the Amiga?

**DZ:** Of course! It is our belief that the future of the Amiga's impact will

remain at the high end of computing with video, graphics, sound, and even the internet. Everything we see as advancements for the computing industry in general were available through the earliest Amigas. Our vision is to make the next level of Amiga computing just as dynamic.

**AC:** What new features does the PowerTower offer along with the PCI slots?

**DZ:** The design of the PowerTower is also geared to fast service and upgrade. The entire "Amiga" is

installed on a slide-out tray. This makes installation of peripherals much easier and allows for rapid replacement in the event a problem occurs. Service turnaround times will be reduced to 24 to 48 hours plus freight time.

**AC:** Service considerations aside, what next generation tools have you included.

**DZ:** We are focusing on the newer drive technology being introduced. The LS 120 SuperFloppy is an innovative solution for the low density, high density, MAC, IBM floppy standards. This drive supports all of these formats and if you use SuperFloppy media, you can get 120 MB on a disk, more than a ZIP cartridge!

In addition, we are including as standard features, what all computer buyers have grown to expect - a 24X CDROM, 18MB of RAM, and stereo speakers.

We are also offering the new Syquest SyJet 1.5 GB removable HDD. This also promotes data portability and makes file sharing and data backup simple.

**AC:** Will you be offering Iomega's Zip technology? This has become almost a standard with PCs and Macs.

**DZ:** Certainly. ZIP drives and the software drivers are available as an option.

**AC:** Your ad has mentioned options, can you tell us more?

**DZ:** We are offering several "factory installed" options in the PowerTower line. This is to insure peripheral compatibility from the start. By controlling the installation process, and the quality of the peripherals, the overall quality of the system increases. As said above, this is a professional system. The expectations of professionals is high and we intend to meet these expectations.

**AC:** How does the new tower fit within Amiga Inc.'s plans?

**DZ:** We have shown this system to Amiga Inc., and the reactions was very positive. We have also discussed some of our strategies and future plans, and this was also viewed as positive. We hope the market reaction to this system will be positive as well. Indications so far are good.

**AC:** One problem to date has been service and support. How will you



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Circle 135 on Reader Service card.

handle these concerns?

**DZ:** Service and support are major concerns that have not always gone well in the past. I personally have been searching for a support venue that I believe will offer our users the best support, not only for our product but for all Amiga products. Unfortunately, not everything has been agreed to and in place as of today. However, by the time your readers read this, we will be in place with our new support line.

I can tell you that our new service policy will take advantage of our new internet service, AmigaOnLine. AmigaOnLine.com will be functional by the time this interview is seen and we believe it will be an excellent means to keep the Amiga community serviced not only on QuikPak issues, but all Amiga topics in general.

**AC:** AmigaOnLine sounds like an ambitious effort, but what about the majority of Amiga users who are not on-line?

**DZ:** We have heard numbers ranging from only 15 to 30 percent of the Amiga community are currently on-line. If you are talking about Amiga users who are using their Amigas

on-line, the number gets even smaller. Many Amiga users have had to use PCs and other platforms because of the lack of overall support for the Amiga from their internet service providers.

AmigaOnLine's goal is to provide web hosting and internet service through out North America. The same kind of simple setup service PC and Mac users get from America On Line and the other large providers. To do this, we are contracting with a nationwide service to provide local access numbers for the entire North American Amiga community.

**AC:** You will not be offering this service in Europe?

**DZ:** Oh, I am sure our package will work there, but we have not made any arrangements with any current European supplier. Europe is definitely of interest to us, but we want to prove what we can do here first.

**AC:** Do you have any costs or pricing structure yet?

**DZ:** All of this is tied to our planned Amiga service procedure and we need to get the final details resolved. However, we should be ready to roll by mid-March at the latest.

**AC:** And the PowerTower will be ready when?

**DZ:** That will be ready any day now. We can't wait any longer. The future of the Amiga and the Amiga community will grow on our ability to provide product that is competitive with the other platforms. A multifaceted platform such as our Amiga PowerTower is the best way to leverage all our competitive advantages at once. Now the Amiga community can work on all levels.

When the NewTek Video Toaster was first released, we had no idea what a profound change it would make in the entire industry of video and film. The PowerTower is a base on which you can build a ToasterFlyer system available nowhere else by utilizing all the best in the current computer marketplace. We have no idea how far this will go, I am just happy QuikPak has made this first step. •AC•

**Notice:** At press time, Amazing Computing/Amiga has decided to work with QuikPak in providing content and other assistance in the development of AmigaOnLine ([www.AmigaOnLine.com](http://www.AmigaOnLine.com)). —Editor.



# QuikPak's David Ziembecki

## Discusses their new Amiga multipurpose tower, Amiga OS 3.2, and AmigaOnline, a new service for the Amiga community.



**AC:** QuikPak has been a player in the Amiga market for some time. When did QuikPak first make Amiga 4000 Towers?

**DZ:** We received the initial order in June of 1995, and began shipping in November of 1995.

**AC:** Your new design for an Amiga 4000 Tower has not adopted the PowerPC, why not?

**DZ:** Of course it will work with the PowerPC as a secondary CPU as well as other CPUs. We have heard the varied opinions about what CPU should be in any new Amiga, and although we agree that the PowerPC has some advantages over the Motorola 68K family, the fact is that the time, money, and talent it will take to do a backward compatible port of the OS to another CPU, such as the PowerPC, is substantial, and a moving target because new CPUs are being announced every week (including a 1000 MHz by IBM).

Because of the time-to-market for a new OS, we decided to make our Amiga systems run with the fastest 68K CPU, and add PCI slots to accommodate one or more co-processor cards. This will let OS 3.1 (and up through OS 3.5 when released) take the best advantage of the Amiga OS features already there. Effectively, we are side stepping the CPU decision by providing PCI slots in our design and letting each application determine the best CPU. Some apps run faster on an Alpha, and so on. This will let Amiga users use the "best of the best".

**AC:** Then the PCI slots will allow the Amiga to run both Amiga OS and other system software and applications?

**DZ:** Yes, with the three PCI slots on our new design, you will be able to add a variety of PCI cards with different processors and hardware applications.

**AC:** You have sidestepped the CPU

issue by making it irrelevant?

**DZ:** Not exactly, we need to have a strong CPU and OS for the Amiga. Our design allows the Amiga user to incorporate a variety of options with their Amiga.

**AC:** Then how does this design effect the future development of the Amiga OS?

**DZ:** It doesn't limit the future at all. It allows diversity while the new OS is being developed.

**AC:** Then you are looking forward to the release of Amiga OS 3.5?

**DZ:** Of course, however, we are concerned with the time a new Amiga OS will take to develop. We have suggested some easy minor tweaks to the Amiga OS 3.1 - something like an OS 3.2 - to address immediate deficiencies and bring it up to 1998 standards, and hopefully the time for this to happen is weeks, not months.

**AC:** You have offered these suggestions to Amiga Inc.? How have they responded?

**DZ:** Like hundreds of Amiga developers and fans around the world, QuikPak has also offered our thoughts to the Amiga Inc. team. Unfortunately, they have a lot of work ahead of them and it is difficult for them to accept or reject anything just now.

**AC:** Why is that?

**DZ:** I really do not want to speak for Amiga Inc. They have their own structure and their own vision. The last thing I want to do is get in their way. I honestly just want my company to produce Amigas and I believe our designs will make the best logical step toward the next level of Amiga productivity.

**AC:** However, from your statements, you believe some modification of the Amiga OS is necessary?

**DZ:** Let's be honest. There is always room for improvement. The current Amiga OS needs modernization. I

believe the most important aspects can be done quickly. We do not need to create an entirely new Amiga OS to properly extend and expand the very workable platform we have today. I have offered my ideas to Amiga Inc. in the hopes that they will work with me to see this through. However, if this is not possible, QuikPak may need to address the expansion problem directly.

**AC:** QuikPak would create their own Amiga OS?

**DZ:** No, we would create an add-on that would be easily adoptable for all Amiga developers and users. As I said, I do not want to get in Amiga Inc.'s way, but, QuikPak has a better opportunity at getting these improvements to market early than they have. I know we need this expansion to promote the next level of Amiga computing. We may need to offer it ourselves. If we do, Amiga Inc. will ultimately benefit most of all from the boost this would give to the market.

**AC:** Your new design is the PowerTower. Where do you see this design in the Amiga line up?

**DZ:** We are introducing the PowerTower as a high end, semipro-

(continued on page 46)



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